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VOLUME 5, EDITION 2

# wethersfield LIFE



**Taking the stage**  
Over the Moon Theatre debuts in town  
*See story on page 26*

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**Wethersfield | \$254,900 | 170021636 | 866 Ridge Road**  
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**Wethersfield | \$237,500 | 170018670 | 467 Brimfield Road**  
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**Wethersfield | \$239,900 | 170019430 | 404 Ridge Road**  
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**Wethersfield | \$179,900 | 170022456 | 745 Silas Deane Hwy**  
Well built 3BR, 2BA Cape in good condition. 1st floor BR has washer/dryer in closet. 3-season porch, newer roof, furnace & electrical. Patio, detached garage w/loft area for storage, shed.  
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**Wethersfield | \$177,000 | 170017578 | 82 Harding Street**  
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**Rocky Hill | \$529,900 | 170010366 | 7 Esther Drive**  
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**Rocky Hill | \$166,500 | 170008648 | 55 Copper Beech Dr.**  
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# Wethersfield LIFE

**November 2017**

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## QUOTE OF NOTE:

"It's a comedy about a dysfunctional family's Thanksgiving dinner." –*Kate Ayers*

See story page 35

## ON THE COVER

The newly formed Over The Moon Theatre Company presented a review of contemporary Broadway music during its production of "Broadway Now" at Sacred Heart Church in Old Wethersfield, its home base. Founders Cindy Lesser and Kelly Boucher ham it up with Musical Director Michael Gowdy.

Photo by Lisa Brisson  
See story page 26

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# CAMPAIGN 2017

## Meet the candidates for Town Council

**W**hen voters go the polls Nov. 7, they will find 14 candidates on the ballot seeking election to the Town Council.

Wethersfield LIFE asked each of them to submit a photo and respond to four questions to help residents cast an informed vote.

They were allowed a maximum of 500 words and editing was limited to style,

grammar, punctuation and spelling. The questions are:

**1) Property taxes are a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**

**2) What should town officials do to attract new businesses to town?**

**3) Other than the subjects above,**

**what do you see as the most important issue facing the town, and what would you do about it?**

**4) Is there any other information you would like to share with voters about your personal or professional qualifications, background, community involvement?**

Here are their responses.

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## Amy Morrin Bello Democrat

**1.** I believe in the importance of increasing our tax base with ongoing economic development and am thrilled with the work that has been accomplished under Democratic leadership. I am hopeful that construction of the Borden project will begin soon and more development along the Silas Deane Highway will follow.

The town and Board of Education have areas where services could be shared. The technology departments have already been combined and there exists a potential for both finance and maintenance to follow.

Increasing our commercial tax

base and reducing costs through shared services are vital to keeping taxes from increasing. The funding of core town services and infrastructure should not be sacrificed.

**2.** Town officials must continue to positively market Wethersfield and work with property owners of underutilized buildings and plots of land to fill available spaces. Assistance with navigating the permitting process and applying for available funding should also continue.

The Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Commission and Tourism Commission are all resources that can play a part in the economic development process. Finally, town officials along with residents must support our local business community so that all businesses in town can thrive.

**3.** Wethersfield has a wonderful public school system and as elected officials it is our obligation to properly fund it to assure its success in the future. I have three daughters: a recent WHS graduate, a sophomore and an eighth-grader. They have had the opportunity to learn in a safe environment with great educators.

My hope is for this experience to continue for all children and that we all continue to be invested in our

public school system. Our multi-year high school renovation is at completion and our football field has been renovated.

Our school system is an asset to our town and a driver in ensuring young working families move to town and stay in town.

Appropriately funding the Board of Education remains a priority for me.

**4.** I'm a lifelong Wethersfield resident and served as assistant town clerk in town for 10 years. I graduated from Providence College and currently work at Wesleyan University. My husband Rich and I choose to raise our three daughters in Wethersfield because we love the strong sense of community.

I am honored to be on council and am proud of my support of our schools, library, economic development, programs for seniors and those in need, and infrastructure investment, all while being mindful of our fiscal responsibility.

I serve on the Budget and Finance, Public Safety, and Rules and Procedures subcommittees, am a member of the Memorial Day Parade Committee and Friends of the Library, and am liaison to the Pension Committee and Library Board.

I'm committed to expanding our environmental focus and strength-

ening our tree ordinance. I will continue efforts to attract and keep businesses and entice families to move to town by maintaining our stellar schools. I am dedicated to keeping Wethersfield a safe, welcoming and affordable community.



## Michael Hurley Republican

**1.** The Board of Education and town have many duplicate services that should be combined in order to gain efficiencies that can be used to keep Wethersfield's aging infrastructure current and well maintained. This should be a top priority in the next few years.

In the first four years that I served on the Republican-led Town

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Council we provided improved services with a minimal effect on property taxes. These included increases in funding for paving, new full-day kindergarten, renegotiating contracts, among others.

We had tight controls over our budgets and were constantly looking for new ways to reduce expenses. Any savings achieved were rolled into the next year in order to keep taxes as low as possible. Just because funds are available does not mean you need to spend them.

**2.** Promoting the build out of what we call a medical corridor on the Silas Deane by expanding medical facilities and office space brought new tax revenue and also new restaurants (Panera, Buffalo Wild Wings and Chips) while the Republicans were in charge. This should still be a focus along with an emphasis on the development of the Berlin Turnpike that the Democrats opposed.

We should not just focus on some areas, we should be promoting businesses in all parts of town. In the last several years of Democratic

control 95 old businesses have left and 95 new businesses have replaced them, but no new real economic development has been accomplished. This is business as usual.

In the last local election the Democrats sent out a mailer proclaiming that Ashley Furniture was coming to town with a picture of their team in front of the Weight Watchers building proclaiming "promises made, promises kept." This ended up being an election year ploy. We need to stop with the games and really start promoting our entire town.

**3.** We need to look at the possibility of the state giving us less money each year as they try to fix the financial crisis at the state level. We can't just look at the next two years.

We need to look out over the next 10 years and project Wethersfield's financial condition and make the structural changes needed to preserve the way of life that Wethersfield residents deserve.

**4.** I am a lifelong resident of Wethersfield and currently serving

my fourth term on the Town Council. I work in finance for Travelers Insurance Company. I was a board member of the George D. Ritchie Soccer Club and volunteered to coach my kids' various sports teams.

I am also a former auditor with the Office of the Auditors of Public Accounts and a former corrections officer at the Hartford Correctional Center. My wife Carol and I have four children.

The last eight years I have applied my personal understanding of our town's needs and concerns along with my financial background to help our town. I am looking forward to continuing this great opportunity to help our town stay a great place to live and raise children.

### John Console Independence Party

**1.** Necessity equals needs. Wants equals "nice to haves." We need to be willing to eliminate the "nice to haves" and eliminate redundancies so necessary services such as police and fire are covered without tax hikes.



It is natural to want luxuries but we need to admit that we cannot afford them all – nor can the state. Adopt transparent and zero-based budgeting for both the town and Board of Education, meaning to examine every dollar spent from dollar number one and not just continually add to the prior year.

Determine necessary revamping of town departments to ensure each dollar is used in an efficient and effective manner. Consider and implement user fees for certain

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# Wethersfield Democrats have given us empty promises, and empty pockets.

Since taking control of the Town Council in 2013, Democrats have ballooned spending and broken promises -- all while student enrollment continues to decline.

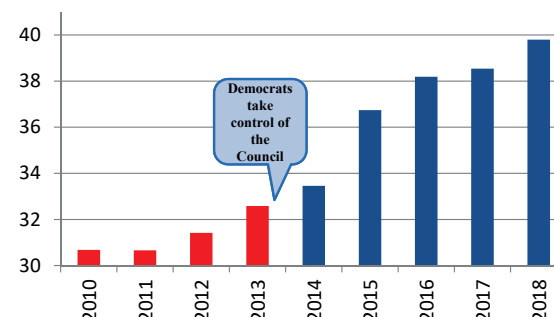
**They are following the same path as Hartford.**

- ▶ While the population of Wethersfield has virtually stayed the same since 2000 and the number of students in our schools has declined, spending has increased by nearly 100%.
- ▶ Our mill rate has skyrocketed from just over 32 mills to nearly 40 mills - giving Wethersfield residents some of the highest property tax rates in the state.
- ▶ In just 5 years Democrats have dramatically increased spending from \$86 million annually to \$102 million annually.



## Skyrocketing Property Taxes

Wethersfield's Mill Rate



Under Democratic control, Wethersfield's mill rate has dramatically increased and has left our town with one of the highest property tax rates in the state of Connecticut.

## VOTE FOR A NEW APPROACH

Four years of a Democratic Council, Legislature and Governor are enough.

**CHOOSE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP FOR THESE CHALLENGING TIMES.**

### GOP TOWN COUNCIL



Mike Hurley, Mike Rell, Stathis Manousos  
Jodi Latina, Tom Mazzarella, Mary Pelletier

### GOP BOARD OF EDUCATION



Lew Michaels, Chris Healy, John Cascio,  
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- ▶ **Control** taxes and spending by streamlining town services and programs.
- ▶ **Strengthen** Wethersfield's economic development to build our tax base.
- ▶ **Ensure** accountability in your local government.

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services. At some point, one cannot expect one's neighbor to pay for their special interests through tax hikes which impact all.

Develop a self-sustaining budget and not rely on the failing state. A rolling 5-10 year forecast needs to be in place and we should implement a discipline where we budget, manage and report against it for both the town and Board of Education.

Work with other towns to cut costs by examining and implementing shared services. Referendums should be required for any expenditure with a total cost over its entire life that exceeds charter limits, rather than avoiding charter rules and taxpayer input through annual leasing, which obscures total costs and avoids taxpayer referendum input on major spending decisions.

Implement meaningful change to the town charter to force referendums on any tax increase so taxpayers have a real voice. Develop and implement protocols to ensure renovations are properly managed, involve individuals with the required credentials and do not go over bud-

get. In short, we need to govern like a business.

**2.** Privatize the economic development department such as by hiring firms on a commission basis to bring in sustainable growth. Retain present businesses by ensuring we are meeting their needs.

Consider tax reductions to a new business if there is a long-term positive impact to the town. Proper reporting of net new businesses and type should be required

We need to be up front and honest with residents about Ashley Furniture, Fun Zone – year after year, fake news.

**3.** Blight and zoning issues – failure to manage blight and adherence to zoning rules is bringing down property values/feel of the town. All over there are unmowed lawns, blue tarps on cars, wood piles, boats, etc., in driveways, trash, industrial vehicles parked in residential driveways on a regular basis over night, etc.

Enforcement would improve our town remarkably. Also we could improve our town for almost free if

everyone would pitch in: mow your lawn, remove blue tarps, put items in your garage.

**4.** Many residents know I was an outspoken deputy mayor for two terms. My ideas were geared to make this town a better place to live. The same old, same old, method of governing no longer works. We need to think out of the box.



**Mary Breton**  
Democrat

**1.** Providing necessary town services while being mindful of the local tax

rate is achieved through the thoughtful review of priorities, identification of opportunities for streamlining and savings, and continuing to find ways to attract new businesses. It is critical to maintain a fiscally sound and well-balanced budget as the Democratic leadership has done.

The quality of life in Wethersfield depends on careful consideration of both current and future needs of all our residents while at the same time keeping our sights on attracting young families to move here. The Democratic team is well prepared to meet the needs of today in a fiscally responsible manner while investing in our future.

**2.** Wethersfield has a unique charm and a strong sense of community. I believe we should stay connected with our residents to hear what kind of businesses they'd like to see in our town. The key to attracting businesses is an active engagement with both current and potential businesses.

What would help current businesses succeed? What would bring



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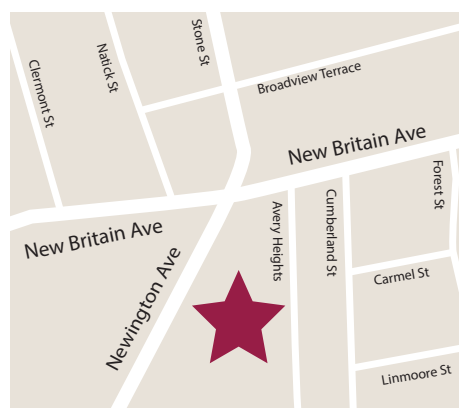


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 COMMUNITY PUBLICATIONS

potential businesses in to Wethersfield? This engagement is important.

We should continue to monitor our economic development plan through collaboration with the Economic Development and Improvement Commission, the chamber of commerce, the Tourism Commission and others. Active collaboration brings a better understanding to achieving successful economic development.

3. Local municipalities must remain positive despite the divisiveness and negativity from our national leaders. Democrats stand firm in the belief that our democracy was founded on the principles of equality, due process, freedom speech, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness – not hatred for others.

The Democratic Party has not swayed from the founding principles of this nation, principles that our country has fought and won wars over. It's critical that our local communities elect leaders who stand up for and embrace positivity, equality and inclusiveness, as this lays the foundation for the moral and social fabric of our entire nation.

Without this, people begin to lose hope. The team is ready to do what is right for Wethersfield by treating people with respect, integrity, fairness, kindness and consideration for all of our Wethersfield residents.

4. My husband John and I chose Wethersfield as our home 19 years ago. We have three children and volunteer at our schools, sports, band and church. I have a business degree from UConn, a law degree from WNEC and several years of professional experience at Aetna leading large projects.

I'm running for Town Council to give back to a town I care about. As a mom of school-age children, I understand how important it is to support a positive community for our youth to thrive.

With my years in a corporate setting, I deal with roadblocks, issues, risks and competing agendas. I've learned that success requires creative solutions, positivity, collaboration and a strong, smart team.

The Wethersfield Democratic team is a strong, smart team with the right values. We're looking

forward to rolling up our sleeves and getting to work on the right solutions for Wethersfield.



**Jodi Latina**  
 Republican

1. This question assumes we have a state budget. Currently, we do not. In lieu of the passage of a state budget, town services are continuing at the current level with strong oversight of the council in conjunction with the town manager and the finance director.

For example, trash pickup, leaf pick up and snow removal will continue. The library hours and our public safety police and fire coverage is also being maintained.

In order to plan ahead, the council has held off on spending for some major initiatives. The Board of Education has also planned for potential cuts in state aid by crafting alternative solutions which are not pretty, but in the worst-case scenario, there is a plan.

2. The council must work in a bipartisan fashion to guide the economic development office. The town of Wethersfield is approximately 13 square miles. We do not have a lot of land that can be developed.

Therefore we must look at creative ways to grow our grand list in order to generate more revenue. The opportunities are easily found on the Silas Deane Highway and the Berlin Turnpike.

Businesses can be attracted to these areas by marketing what our town has to offer. We have a conservation plan that was crafted in 2013, but have the benchmarks been achieved?

There are many opportunities in our town to create the village center, paying honor to our history and at the same time building



up a town center that is pedestrian friendly with mixed use for businesses and living spaces for young professionals who want to live along a transit line. We just have to be active in moving the plan forward.

**3.** Maintaining our infrastructure with out a dependency on state aid. It will become increasingly difficult to maintain roads, water ways and sewers if the state cuts aid to cities and towns.

As leaders, we must start the conversations about regionalization. Within our own town structure we have opportunities to share services.

Why do we need two finance departments between the town and the Board of Education? These are opportunities to streamline government and save money and create efficiencies.

There was some positive movement in sharing the information technology departments of the BOE and the town. This is a great step in the right direction. The hope is to expand that policy with surrounding communities. Ultimately, this

could help in keeping taxes flat, or even lowering them.

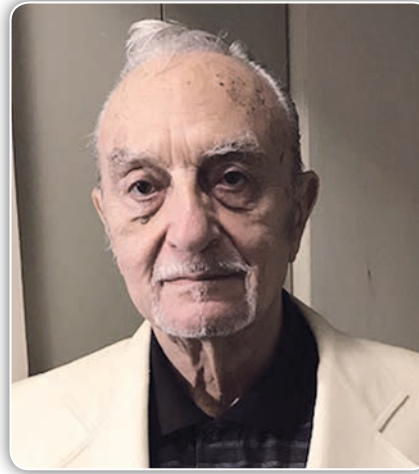
**4.** I have been a Wethersfield resident for 16 years. I am married to Anthony Latina, a South Catholic graduate and current men's basketball coach at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield.

We have two children, Luke and Zoe. I graduated from Newington High School and received my B.S. in communications from Eastern Connecticut State University.

I am the chief of staff for Mayor Erin Stewart in New Britain. When I'm not running to a meeting, soccer, or basketball game, I can be found on a Yoga mat or walking Duke, our Havanese pup.

### Paul Copp Independence Party

**1.** The question is why would I, Paul Copp, the chairman of the Independence Party be a candidate for the Wethersfield Town Council? Perhaps more than anyone, I have been a keen observer of our town's politics and management and I am very concerned.



The Independence Party and I have supported candidates who give their word that they will change certain key factors, and yet do nothing. They are unwilling to fix anything, for political reasons, or more likely are unable because of a lack of skill, information and/or time.

Also, the town manager is afraid of change and sabotages the best-laid plans of our volunteers. When the town manager was hired he was inexperienced and unfortunately has learned little in the years he has held the position. At a salary

of \$140,000 a year we deserve better.

Therefore, I am running for mayor. How is the mayor elected? He is elected by a vote by the town councilors that you will elect on Tuesday, Nov. 7. Normally, the highest vote-getter on the winning party is so elected.

By the above statement, I have alienated the political bosses of both the Democratic and the Republican parties as well as those two or three that want not the job, but the title. So, it's up to you, the voter.

To be elected mayor, I therefore must obtain the highest vote total among every candidate for the Town Council. I absolutely need your vote. The town questions are well known and obvious. So are the tools to solve and answer them.

Why are you, the citizen, only allowed to vote for six council candidates on your ballot when there are nine open positions? The answer is that the party bosses like it that way so they can control the town. Why are there no debates for these, the highest elected positions? The political parties and those that have

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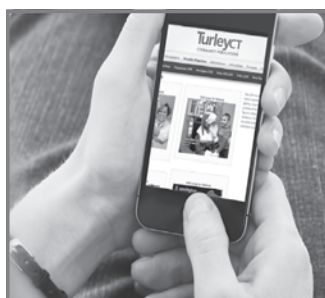
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something to hide do not want the issues to be discussed. You may ask, what are they hiding?

Why do the same amount of businesses leave Wethersfield as arrive in our town? That is why you the homeowner pays most of our town taxes. Shared employees and services among the town and the BOE – why after all these years of demands by all of us, why is it not yet accomplished?

Why has the town manager not yet placed the town check registers on the website in real time so that you, the citizen taxpayer, can see what is being spent as it is spent?

We have the tools. The charter must be reopened for a few certain items to legislate that there be debates; real time check registers, open voting for all nine council positions, order shared employees and services and order establishment of citizens audit committees, among other items needed.

Finally, please vote for all Independence Party endorsed candidates found elsewhere in this publication.



### Matthew Forrest Democrat

**1.** To minimize property taxes, Wethersfield needs to diversify and increase other sources of revenue. There are multiple ways we can do this. One is increasing both the number and the density of commercial properties along the Silas Deane Highway and Berlin Turnpike.

Our economic development office has made good strides with 92 new companies entering town in the last few years. With additional staff, a stronger focus on redeveloping

existing properties into more multi-story developments similar to Blue Back Square in West Hartford, and aggressively courting new businesses, we can make an immediate impact that allows us to continue providing needed town services at minimum effect to homeowners.

We need to explore the fit of other common municipal sources of revenue, such as parking and telecommunication tower fees, that have been very profitable for other towns similar to ours. Longer term, we should look to move toward a university endowment model where investment income helps offset a portion or all of our operating expenses.

We can also get smarter about the money we spend. While on the board, I renegotiated an almost 25 percent reduction in attorneys' fees in a rising price environment.

When previously on the council, I renegotiated energy costs and moved to single-stream recycling. These saved the town and BOE hundreds of thousands of dollars while being more environmentally conscious.

By taking strong measures to be smarter about where our existing dollars go and strategically driving toward commercial and investment growth over the long run, we can create a more sustainable model that increases value for all residents.

**3.** There are three additional issues extremely important to our town and its residents. The first is infrastructure. Many of our elementary school and roads are becoming run down. I would focus on creating good educational spaces for our children and a strong transportation/telecommunication infrastructure for economic growth.

The next is reducing crime. Many neighborhoods have been affected by an increase in car theft. I am a supporter of law enforcement and appropriate initiatives needed to curtail this crime uptick and to support our police in their overall efforts for a safe town.

I am also a supporter of improving the beautification of Wethersfield. Whether it is green spaces, street signage or burying wires on the Silas Deane, these

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# Vote Row A on Tuesday November 7th

## THE RIGHT VALUES AND EXPERIENCE TO KEEP WETHERSFIELD MOVING FORWARD



Back row left to right, **Elaine Steinmiller-Pardise**,  
**Anthony Spinella**, **Mary Breton**,  
**Amy Morrin Bello** and **Kevin Hill**.

Front row left to right, **Ken Lesser**, **Matt Forest**,  
**Ginger McCurdy**, **Polly Moon** and **Tony Martino**.

- ★ Keep taxes in check without harmful cuts
- ★ Provide Senior Tax Relief and attract young families
- ★ Wethersfield Schools: Successful and Safe
- ★ Protection of the environment and open space
- ★ Preserve Wethersfield's historic character

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## THE RIGHT VALUES

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★  
DEMOCRATS

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quality of life improvements attract business and add to town pride.

I am a lifelong, fourth-generation resident. My wife and I have two young children who are entering the school system. I own and operate a law firm in Wethersfield with four employees and strongly support small business owners.

I am an advocate of our elderly community members. I am honored to have spent the last 14 years as a volunteer serving Wethersfield.

I spent six years on the Town Council protecting the Wethersfield Cove and Wilkus Farm, four years on the Energy Committee, where I chaired the Green Summit Committee, and four years on the Board of Education, where we ensured low class sizes and supported teachers in the classroom.

### Tom Mazzarella Republican

**1.** Property taxes are out of control and have been increasing at an unsustainable rate. If this trend continues, residents who are struggling financially and seniors on fixed



incomes will have no choice but to relocate to less-expensive locations. This in turn will cause property values to decline.

Wethersfield is near fully built and has limited options for commercial and industrial development; therefore, increasing the tax base as a source of added revenue is only part of the solution. We must focus our efforts on the spending side of the equation while carefully maintaining the quality of life Wethersfield residents are entitled to.

This can be accomplished by becoming more efficient in every aspect of town and Board of Education operations. Significant savings can also be realized by elimination of duplicate services that currently exist between town and Board of Education functions. Let educators do what they are best at and let town staff maintain facilities.

Our town needs to adopt a common-sense approach to spending just like we all do in our own households. We all need to live within our means and not spend what we don't have. The town must learn to do the same.

**2.** As we get a handle on property taxes and the town's overall economy begins to improve, Wethersfield will begin to attract new businesses and we will once again become a destination for young families. Wethersfield has an economic development plan that needs to be updated with realistic goals.

Once we have a solid plan in place we need to aggressively market our town. By marketing, I mean that we need to seek out potential busi-

nesses and sell them on our town. We need to be proactive rather than reactive in our economic development strategy.

**3.** As of this writing the state of Connecticut continues to operate without a budget. Under the governor's executive order Wethersfield is facing a \$9.3 million shortfall in Education Cost Sharing. In the next few months our town's substantial cash reserves will be depleted and drastic measures will need to be taken just to maintain basic town services.

The newly elected Town Council will face some of the most difficult and challenging decisions that no town government could have anticipated.

**4.** I have been a resident for 50 years and am a product of the Wethersfield school system as are my wife and two adult children. This year I am retiring after 40 years in the aviation industry, having built a successful business of my own from the ground up.

My real life business experience and common-sense approach to

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problem solving will be an asset to town government. On a personal note I feel that now is the time for me to give back to the community that provided me with the education, tools and drive to succeed.



### Kenneth Lesser Democrat

**1.** I think we have to closely scrutinize the budget for any and all possible savings and look to be as efficient as possible in delivering services. I believe a budget is a statement of priorities and I think our priorities

should be keeping taxes in check while maintaining strong schools and vital services.

**2.** I think we have to aggressively promote our town as a great place to do business. We have had many new businesses start in the last few years and we need to build on that.

I think we could use another grocery store in town, perhaps on the Silas Deane. I am also in favor of restarting the Silas Deane Advisory Committee to get input from residents to build a plan to revitalize the Highway.

**3.** I will mention two. I would like to see us start a Veteran's Committee, as we have many needy veteran's in town. Over 1,000 veterans regularly use the food bank and I think we need a committee to better understand their needs.

The second one is I think we need to provide our students with business skills to make them more career and college ready. I would like to see our students have access to job shadows, industry tours and possibly have internships, too.

I am in favor of starting a

Business Advisory Committee to work with the schools to promote these opportunities for students.

**4.** I am currently involved in Wethersfield as a member of the Hunger Action Team, as a member of the Economic Development and Improvement Commission, as a member of the Youth Advisory Board and as president of the Mayor's Charity Ball. I also was an assistant coach for my daughter's basketball team from Webb Elementary.

I previously served as a town councilor and school board member in Newington. I currently work as a senior wealth management banker in a larger wealth management firm. My wife Cindy and I have three daughters: Rachel, Lauren and Allie.

### Stathis Manousos Republican

**1.** In just five years, current leadership increased annual spending from \$86 million to \$102 million and the mill rate from 32 to 40, one of the highest property tax rates in the state. Wethersfield's property tax rate is 34 percent higher than the



state average.

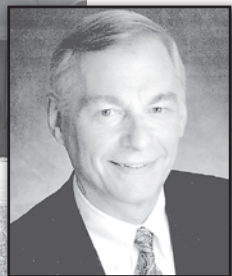
When I was on the Town Council majority a few years ago we proved we didn't need to waste taxpayer money to govern effectively. We were able to keep spending increases at the lowest levels in 10 years.

We passed reasonable budgets without impacting town services. We set up a road improvement fund to make sure roads were paved in a responsible, pay-as-you go approach, rather than issuing bonds (debt).

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We set up a school capital improvement fund into which we incentivized the BOE to deposit budget surpluses rather than unnecessarily spend it all. We implemented single-stream recycling that saved money while making garbage disposal easier for residents.

We eliminated pension plans for new employees and instituted a 401(K) type plan which will yield long-term savings. We also were able to fully fund educational initiatives (e.g., all-day kindergarten) and complete the installation of lights on Cottone Field.

We got things done while laying the groundwork for a stronger future.

**2.** Attracting new business is challenging, regardless of who is in charge. I believe the solution starts by making Wethersfield a more attractive place to live.

We need to attract and retain families. Families drive spending and provide the demographics retailers and businesses desire. Families want to see responsible funding of town programs/services, the best athletic fields and facilities possible, and quality education while minimizing tax increases.

Residents need to see value in the relatively higher tax burden they support. Because most of our tax base comes from residential property owners, we also need to support reasonable redevelopment projects to increase the commercial tax base and help offset the burden on residents.

**3.** Our biggest challenges will be managing our growing debt load and dealing with the reduction in state funding to the town and education system.

Our debt is the highest it has ever been and higher than our neighboring towns. We pay \$5 million annually in debt service. So we need a debt reduction plan immediately to start chipping away at our underlying debt.

Second, to deal with state funding reductions, we need to identify and prioritize our “wants” versus “needs” and make some tough decisions.

**4.** I’m a graduate of Wethersfield Public Schools with an MBA in Finance from UConn. I was on the Town Council a few years ago when both my sons were in our schools.

I have a sister & brother-in-law who are empty nesters in town. I also have an 89-year old father who lives on fixed income in town. I am also president of the Wethersfield Soccer Club.

I tell you this because I have a vested interest in balancing the needs of all our residents and a track record of being a good steward of taxpayer money.



**Tony Martino**  
Democrat

**1.** We have many seniors on fixed incomes (I am one) and young families just starting out. The property tax and education are the most important issues on our residents’ minds.

We have to keep the mill rate as low as possible. During the past four years, the Town Council has worked with the Board of Education through shared services to combine data services and become more efficient.

We are working on other areas where we can combine functions

with the board.

We have a competent and qualified staff. We need to review projects that are bid out to contractors and see which ones can be done in house to reduce project costs.

**2.** Town officials need to be involved to keep current businesses in town and attract new ones. I go to chamber of commerce Business After Hours to meet with town business owners to make sure they know we are business friendly and make sure they are aware of the facade grant program and Shop Wethersfield program.

Democrats are working with the town planner, commercial real estate brokers and commercial property owners to help them find businesses to fill empty stores. During the past four years, 93 new businesses have moved to town. Businesses are staying in town, Cove Deli and Qualidigm both bought buildings and Beaver Brook veterinary built a building, all moving to the Silas Deane Highway.

A developer is under construction building high-end apartments on Ridge Road. Another developer has gone thru planning and zoning and inland wetlands and is planning to build, in the near future, on the Fun Zone property a five-story building on the Silas Deane Highway called The Borden.

We are following thorough on our goal to increase our commercial tax base to offset our tax needs, not to add more burden on our residents. This shows that Wethersfield is a business friendly community.

**3.** Other important issues to be addressed are infrastructure repairs. We need to continue to provide our facility managers with the funds needed to do preventive maintenance to stop our buildings from falling into such disrepair that they require capital improvement projects for the facility.

We also need to add money

each year to our pavement repair account to keep up with our roads to keep them from falling into such disrepair that they require major road reconstruction.

**4.** I am currently finishing my second term on Town Council. I currently chair three council committees and I am council liaison to five commissions. I work tirelessly for the needs of Wethersfield residents and work to cut expenses to keep taxes down.

I have lived in Wethersfield for 38 years and my sons were educated here. I belong to civic and fraternal organizations, one of which has the motto “service above self.” Please remember me and the Democratic team on Nov. 7 so we can continue to give back to the town that provides a great education and living environment for our families.



**Mary Pelletier**  
Republican

**1.** Wethersfield has dramatically increased its spending in recent years, which has left us with one of the highest property tax rates in the state. The challenge for the next Town Council is to maintain services while making the necessary decisions to live within our means.

Controlling expenses needs to become a greater priority. We must actively seek out opportunities to share services and equipment with



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neighboring towns to reduce costs. We must look for ways to eliminate duplication, excess and waste in town government.

When putting together the annual budget, every government function and its cost should be analyzed line by line to determine whether expenses are necessary and justified.

**2.** Wethersfield's easy access to I-91, close proximity to the State Capitol, and beautiful surroundings make it an ideal place to start a business. To make Wethersfield even more attractive, we need to lower our mill rate to make us competitive with neighboring towns, which will increase investment in commercial property and decrease the cost of doing business here.

Wethersfield also needs a renewed focus on economic development. Town officials need to take a more proactive approach in marketing Wethersfield to prospective businesses. We also need to streamline and improve coordination among the various town departments, boards and commissions to reduce

the administrative burden that delays and discourages new businesses from opening.

Town officials should also work harder to keep existing businesses in town by listening and responding to the needs and concerns of current business owners.

**3.** Town government needs to adapt to the new economic reality we are facing in light of the massive budget shortfalls at the state level that will likely reduce the amount of state funds available to Wethersfield for the foreseeable future. We can no longer afford business as usual.

As an attorney, I will be an effective advocate for greater fiscal discipline and efficiency in our town government. As a mother, I will reject irresponsible, costly borrowing from future generations so that our children can afford to continue living here.

As a newcomer to the Town Council and a political outsider, I will bring a fresh perspective and new ideas to town hall. I will ensure our schools are properly funded while working to reduce our proper-

ty taxes so that our seniors can afford to stay in their homes and Wethersfield can continue to be a great place to live and raise a family.

**4.** I am an attorney and a mom of two children in elementary school. I have a law degree from Duke University and am a former U.S. Department of Justice attorney.

I am currently serving on the board of the Wethersfield Housing Authority, the Wethersfield Library Board of Directors and the Wethersfield Zoning Board of Appeals. I also served on Wethersfield's Charter Review Commission from 2014-2015.

I am a member of the Wethersfield Village Improvement Association and a parishioner at Christ the King parish (Corpus Christi Church).

### Anthony Spinella Democrat

**1.** In order to provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate two things are critical: economic development and reevaluation of what we consider



necessary town services.

Economic development will help defray the property tax burden on each Wethersfield resident because it will expand our tax base. The Silas Deane Highway has been dormant for as long as I can remember and we need to do all we can to attract new businesses. Attracting new business to the Silas Deane Highway must be done with keeping a close eye on attracting the right businesses for the town's residents.

Second, we must reconsider what we consider to be necessary

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services. The tax framework that we now rely on is not a sustainable model. We must look to regionalization and shared services in order to use our tax dollars more efficiently.

**2.** Town officials must actively court businesses into Wethersfield. Simply sitting back and waiting will not work. We must show businesses why Wethersfield is such a great town to be in.

**3.** Public safety is another critical issue facing this town. We must equip our police and fire departments with all of the resources that they require in order to protect all of our citizens. I believe public safety to be a core government function.

**4.** I am a lifelong resident of Wethersfield and believe Wethersfield is a great town to live in. My experience as a public servant both on my first term on the council and a prosecutor have been the most rewarding experiences of my life.

I have dealt with people from all walks of life and believe that I always try to do what is best for the people of Wethersfield. I do not always vote with one political party. My vote is always what I believe would be best for the town's residents.



### Michael Rell Republican

**1.** Wethersfield residents are unfortunately dealing with the ramifications of the longest state budget impasse in Connecticut's history. Nearly all of the state funds our town relies on are held up by the governor's executive order.

Right now, more than ever, ensuring that Wethersfield taxpayer dollars are spent appropriately and that the public is aware of how their tax dollars are spent is a high priority for me. We should look at increased efficiencies, lowering costs and regionalizing some functions.

Currently, Wethersfield is reaping the benefits of cost-saving measures implemented under a

Republican council. These measures include a defined contribution plan for municipal retiree pensions that is saving taxpayers money, a dedicated levy for road improvements and single stream recycling.

This was done all while keeping taxes low and without impacting services to residents.

**2.** These past couple months have shown how a fragile economy can shape companies decisions to stay in Connecticut or leave for greener pastures. GE, Aetna and Alexion are just examples of companies leaving.

Wethersfield cannot be a microcosm of the state. The council should consider the impact higher mill rates (taxes) have on businesses. Surrounding towns with lower mill rates are attracting business that could add to our town's tax base.

While the majority party will claim record number of new businesses in town over the years, many of these businesses moved into spaces vacated by businesses who've left and relocated elsewhere. Residents need to ask themselves why are property taxes going up if new businesses are coming in?

**3.** While our high property tax is the most pressing concern I hear from residents, others are concerned about the increase in burglaries and

break-ins. This is an issue that has manifested itself into all 169 cities and towns in the state. I have discussed the issue with our police and they are working to turn this around.

I have asked for increased patrols and more public awareness of the problem and what residents can do to prevent themselves from being a victim. I will continue to advocate for these and ask our police to host community forums throughout town, break-ins are not just occurring in one area.

**4.** I have always believed in the importance of giving back to a community that does so much for its residents and families. I grew up in a family that served its community on the state level and on the local level. Early on I learned that if change was needed, I should become part of the collective voice for change.

Wethersfield and its people have a special place in my heart. My wife and I are proud to be raising our family in such an outstanding community. My love of history and the quintessential New England charm of Wethersfield are just a few of the many reasons why we live here.

As a town councilman, I enjoy being able to advocate for you and will continue to work hard for all of Wethersfield's residents. **WL**

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# CAMPAIGN 2017

## Meet the candidates for Board of Education

**W**hen voters go the polls Nov. 7, they will find eight candidates on the ballot seeking election to the Board of Education.

Wethersfield LIFE asked each of them to submit a photo and respond to four questions to help residents cast an informed vote.

They were allowed a maximum of

500 words and editing was limited to style, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

The questions are:

- 1) How would you provide necessary education services while also trying to control expenses?**
- 2) What are the most important education issues facing the town, and**

**what would you do about them?**

**3) What changes in policy do you think are needed to improve the quality of a local public education?**

**4) Is there any other information you would like to share with voters about your personal or professional qualifications, background, community involvement?**

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**Francesco Lupis, MD**

*Family medicine*

Education: Flower Hospital, Sylvania, OH  
SUNY Stony Brook University Hospital,  
Stony Brook, NY



**Thomas Rinaldi, MD**

*Internal medicine*

Education: Harbor Hospital Center, Baltimore, MD  
St. Vincent Hospital, New York, NY



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### Here are their responses.



#### Kevin Hill Democrat

**1.** The municipal and state budgets will be the most pressing issue in Wethersfield for the next two years. We must continue to find as many efficiencies in government as we possibly can.

I currently serve on the Shared Services Committee with other town officials and I hope to continue my work on this committee so that we may stretch our tax dollars as far as we can.

**2.** As previously stated, the budget is the main driver in terms of education issues. We must be creative and efficient in our budgeting so that we may retain the qualities that make our school district so desirable.

**3.** We must look to build on the successes we have had the past two years. Our district has experienced record rates of growth in our

standardized testing, a 100 percent graduation rate and the completion of the Wethersfield High School renovation.

I want to continue to move the district forward and provide the proper environment for our students. The board has demonstrated this by consistently making small class size a priority for our schools and students.

Data shows that small class size improves student engagement, teacher retention and academic performance.

**4.** I am a lifelong resident of Wethersfield and attended Wethersfield Public Schools along with my five siblings. My wife Jen and I live in Old Wethersfield with our two children, Eleanor and James, who recently entered first grade at Hanmer Elementary.

I have a master's degree in American history as well as public policy and have been a government affairs consultant in Hartford for the past 13 years. I have served on the board for the past two years and I am chair of the Community and Public Relations Committee.

I hope to continue my work on the board and ask for your support in November.

#### Charles Carey Republican

**1.** Having previously served for four years on the Board of Education, two of those years as the chair of the Finance Committee, I know first



hand that providing Wethersfield with millions of dollars in education services is no easy task.

As a board member, I had the opportunity to work through the budget process and to ask many questions about how and why we were spending money in certain areas. If elected, I will still continue to question the status quo and find ways to allocate limited resources in order to adequately fund all the necessary education services.

**2.** The most important issue facing Wethersfield at this time is the increase number of number of ELL (English Language Learners) students. Across the district we are seeing our number of ELL students increase.

We need to find ways to support these students and their parents. I believe we need to start looking at how we are spending our money and find ways to allocate

money to better support our ELL students.

**3.** With so much uncertainty in our state budget this year and in the years to come, the biggest change in policy that can improve the quality of local education is getting rid of unfunded mandates. There are many mandates that the state and federal government impose on the town without adequate funding.

Examples are the new evaluation system and the change to Common Core State Standards. Working with lawmakers who represent us in Hartford will help achieve this change.

**4.** I am a sixth grade math teacher in New Britain. I have my bachelor's of science in elementary education from Central Connecticut, master's in early childhood special education from Southern Connecticut and another master's in educational leadership from Central Connecticut.

I am currently on the Wethersfield High School Building Committee overseeing the completion of that \$86 million project. I am also the PTO president at Charles Wright School. I have also previously served on the Board of Education for four years. (2011-2015)

As the state budget continues to be in limbo one of the biggest issues that our town faces is spending. As previous chair of the board's Finance Committee I worked hard to make the process

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as transparent and fiscally responsible as I could.

With the state budget in such shambles, as a local board we must roll our sleeves up and work hard at having as lean a budget as possible without cutting services to our students.



## Ginger McCurdy Democrat

**1.** It is especially imperative, given the current financial climate in Connecticut, for towns to actively plan for the end of the funding status quo. The on-again, off-again, fluid amounts of state aid to Wethersfield that are currently under discussion are not a one-time event, but rather a glimpse of the future.

The town and Board of Ed of Wethersfield should make even better use of Shared Services Committee to maximize the benefits reaped from taxpayer funds. We should also investigate ways to share costs and services with the surrounding towns.

We have to think and plan differently from the way things have always been done. We cannot jeopardize Wethersfield's excellent track record of providing quality education by holding fast to funding methodologies of the past.

One possibility under discussion is the creation of a Wethersfield Education Foundation, through which local businesses and other stakeholders could assist with funding some of the "nice to haves" that may not fit in the BOE core budget.

**2.** The most important education issue facing the town is the maintenance of momentum in the planning for curriculum, school building and policy

improvements. The tendency for organizations under stress, as ours is due to funding uncertainties, is to concentrate on the here and now, limiting focus to interim solutions, such as budget freezes.

We must continue to plan for curriculum improvements and renovations to our buildings so that when the budget picture clears we will be able to proceed without undue delay. On a smaller scale, we should continue to closely monitor class sizes, which are linked to stronger school performance.

**3.** State policies have an enormous impact on the town's ability to provide a quality, cost-efficient education to our children. We must push our state legislators to simplify or even remove some of these mandates, especially now that they may become completely unfunded to Wethersfield and 84 other school districts in Connecticut.

On a more micro level, however, some issues in need of review include the investigation of later start times for the high school, which have been linked to improved school performance in teenagers. Also at the high school level, it is important that we provide real world experience to students at all levels, especially those whose future may not include attending college.

**4.** As the former manager of financial analysis for a Connecticut subsidiary of Barclays Bank, I was responsible for creating strategic plans, budgets and financial forecasts. I will use this background in financial analysis to assist the Wethersfield Board of Education in its continued efforts to provide an excellent and cost-effective education to the children of Wethersfield.

In my 37 years in town, I have served on the Webb School Building Committee, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and as co-president of the Webb and Emerson-Williams PTOs and the Wethersfield Co-Operative Nursery School. I also oversaw the interclub swimming program at Pine Acres for a decade and tutored students at four Wethersfield elementary schools in math, reading and writing skills.

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## John Cascio Republican

**1.** Wethersfield has been doing an excellent job in offering educational services and also controlling expenses. Our budgets provide a road map for the financial management of the Board of Education, including controlling costs.

The administrative team has worked very hard in partnership with the Board of Education during this financially challenged environment. Strategies have been put into

effect for the Board of Education's budget plan and is being monitored daily. Benchmarks have been put into place with regards to review of purchasing procedures and hiring.

2. Educational issues facing Wethersfield are in the area of facilities and maintenance. Several classrooms are still housed in portable units which have outlived their time. Many of our schools have been well maintained, however, they are starting to show their age.

Our schools need to change with the growth in technology. Other issues are class sizes, unfunded mandates and state funding. A strategic plan has been formed as well as a committee to look into an educational foundation.

3. I feel very confident that the policies that are in place are very comprehensive and up to date within the district. They are monitored by our policy and planning committee, BOE and the administrative team. Our state association CABA works with our district with policy/legislative changes.

4. I believe in teamwork,

common sense, pride, accountability, involvement, respect, service, family and trust. I don't ask of people to do things that I have not already done or would not participate in.

I feel I will continue to offer a solid presence as well as a historical wealth of information that has happened within our community over the last 28 years. I am receptive to individuals who have questions and I am always willing to listen to their constructive comments.

It has been my honor to have served the town of Wethersfield for the past 28 years in a variety of positions. In 1989 I was elected to the Wethersfield Board of Education and served as vice chairman and chairman for six years. In 1999 to 2009 I served on the Town Council.

I am currently serving on the Board of Education since 2009. Sometimes it is very important to look back at individuals that have made a difference, not only in your world, but in your community.

I feel I live a good life, not only as a volunteer in Wethersfield, but as an individual that considers family

an important part of decision making. I am very fortunate to have had the support over these last years of my wife Kathi and daughter Kyleen, who are also very involved with shaping young lives within our community.

I am also very lucky to have a wonderful family who has given me an excellent foundation.

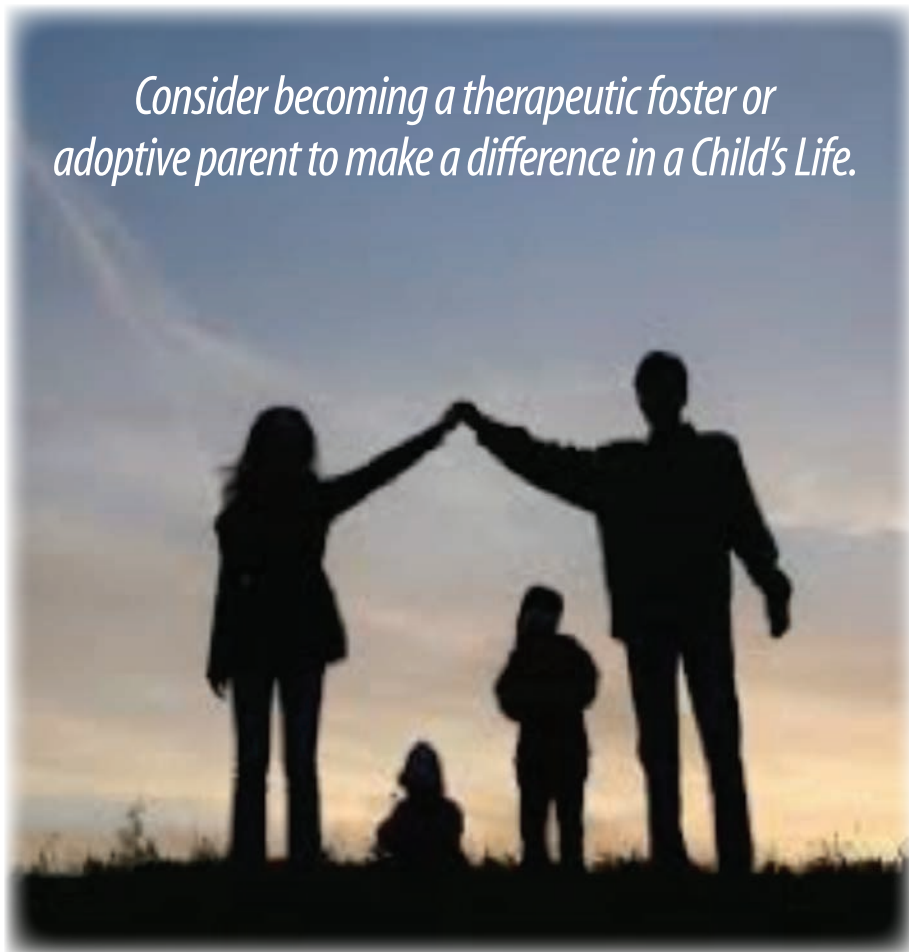


## Polly Moon Democrat

**1.** Careful review of budget items, followed by monthly monitoring of

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expenses to maintain transparency and efficiency. Continue to negotiate reasonable wage increases, changes in health and benefits and pension contributions resulting in significant savings with a minimum additional cost to employees.

Ongoing review of shared services. Consolidation of IT services, including trouble shooting, procedures, training and staffing, have created efficiencies that benefit both town and education.

-Continue improvement and innovation of in-district special education services. Tuition and transportation costs are fluid and hard to budget. Market special education programs to encourage outside tuition income from other districts. Explore regional shared services.

2. Funding – plan and implement realistic budgets and continue transparency of the budget process through budget workshops and monthly reporting. Support establishment of an independent foundation which would assist the school district through scholarships and grants

Quality of education – continue

efforts to update technology, including one-to-one Chromebooks. Continue to explore the academy model exposing students to various industries and careers through partnership with local businesses, hands-on training and experiences.

Continue update of curriculum, which now includes offering more UConn courses providing college credits, increasing our graduation credit requirements and seeing our test scores rise. Encourage hiring and retention of the best administrators and teachers who are committed to Wethersfield.

Support early childhood education, including pre-K.

Cultural and language diversity – focus on English language training by devoting more resources and expanding services, including community outreach and support of families.

Class size and classroom space – a long-term goal is the review of our elementary schools' infrastructure and how we can accommodate a student population that, unlike many areas of the state, is growing

and diversifying.

Special education – continue to improve in-district services.

Security – maintain funding of full-time security director and resource officers. Continue updating security in each school, training staff and students as well as working with the police department and local social services to address opioid and other substance abuse and bullying.

3. Comprehensive review of unfunded state and federal mandates and statutes that tax staff and budget resources. Eighty percent of expenditures consist of unfunded mandates and contractual obligations.

4. I have contributed to a board that has focused on moving the district forward and accomplishing a great deal through cooperation and mostly non-partisan efforts.

My vast experience in service to the town, including chairing the town's Insurance Committee, chairing the Library Board and serving six years on the Board of Education, including two years as chairperson of finance and information, com-

bined with many years in the customer-focused, problem-solving, finance-driven insurance industry have contributed to my ability to see issues from different sides.

I appreciate the importance not only of providing key services to our students, parents and staff, but also understanding the limitations of funding and the needs of other taxpayers, including seniors.



**Christopher Healy**  
Republican

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ever given the uncertainty with the state budget. School administrators should seek permission from Board of Education on the use of any surplus funds.

The board should explore additional joint purchasing and shared services with town government or other school districts where appropriate. This is long overdue and will help maintain instruction in classroom.

**2.** The Board of Education must insist on more robust attempts to make students and parents aware of all educational and career options, beginning freshman year. A college experience shouldn't be the only path for students.

The demands of the economy demonstrate there are many careers open to those with different aptitude and skills and our schools should be trying to match them as best we can.

We must improve college-credit courses so they are worthy of their advanced learning status. More language and science arts are crucial to a demanding world economy.

**3.** Schools must have active interaction with businesses, non-profits and government to expose students to real-world careers. This will allow students and parents to provide post-graduation opportunities to learn in a college, vocational or independent setting.

**4.** I have served on several town boards – Board of Ethics, Charter Revision Commission and Youth Service Bureau – where I was recently elected chairman. I have also volunteered as recreational basketball coach.

Throughout my professional career as a journalist, government affairs specialist and government

official, I have been involved in education policies issues and appreciate the dedication of teachers in the classroom.

Our focus as Board of Education members should be on demanding excellence, allowing teachers, parents and children to work effectively to make their educational experience complete. It is also critical for school officials to do a better job of communicating policies with the general public and that is where I hope to add my experience the most.



**Elaine Steinmiller**  
**Paradise**  
**Democrat**

**1.** We try to budget the best we can for our households, but often unexpected problems arise like a broken water heater or broken appliance that was not in the budget. Wethersfield's Board of Education has a budget that serves the needs of all the students. It is broken down line by line and each dollar is accounted for similar to your own household budgets.

However, just as our home items are getting more expensive

so are the needs of running a school. I would try to keep expenses down by being creative. I might ask that the Town Council and Board of Education look for ways to share services.

**2.** One of the most important education issues facing our town is educating the diverse population. Wethersfield has quite a diverse population with many students enrolling that do not speak English. We are also getting students from the devastated island of Puerto Rico.

We know the children are not responsible for the horrible turn of events that island has experienced. We must open our school doors and make them feel safe each day. But we do not have enough people on staff to help give ELL lessons to these children.

We have a variety of languages to accommodate in our schools. We need to be prepared to handle this situation and handle it quickly. Letting these students sit in a classroom and not understand a word that is spoken is wrong.

**3.** The change in policy I would like to see is a charter revision. Our Board of Education budget is due to the Town Council by May 15 but they get to hold it and review it for a very long time. This puts the Board of Education on hold; we don't know what cuts will be made or if the budget will be left alone.

**4.** I feel I am qualified to be a Board of Education member because I know this town so well. My family has over 100 years of history here. I have resided here all my life and I attended school here.

I know the feelings of most of the people in town, from the elderly,

to the school-age parents with children, to the students who have just returned home from college, and our present students. I am willing to listen to anyone who has a concern.

I attended Southern Connecticut University and when I graduated I returned home. I was hired on a Friday in February after the December 1973 ice storm and went to work on the following Monday teaching a fourth grade in Hanmer School. That was the beginning of a career that lasted 37 years in Wethersfield.

I know the workings of the schools and the need for small class sizes. Each teacher needs to meet the needs of such a variety of students, the smaller the classes, the more one-to-one help each child could get.



**Lew Michaels**  
**Republican**

**1.** I think we need to take a serious look inward at our school system to ensure we are providing programs that make sense for our district. Making sure to not simply continue programs from years past that may

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no longer be serving a population in the district.

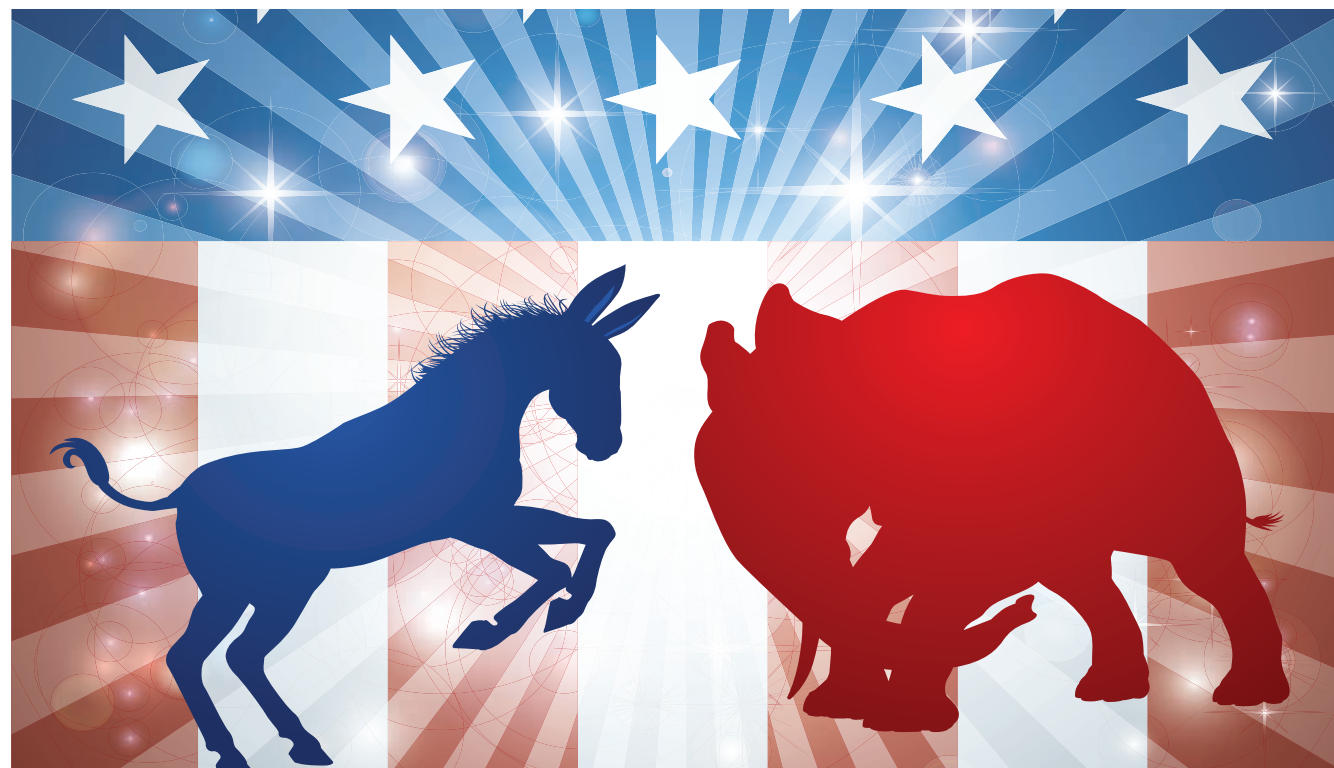
**2.** As always, class size continues to be an ongoing concern of our residents, making sure that we are planning ahead and see the trends. Funding our school system in the right areas and not simply throwing away taxpayers' hard-earned money to Band-Aid issues instead of fixing underlying problems.

Running a school system is hard work, we need to make sure we are running it smarter, not harder.

**3.** I think we need to look how we budget and spend. Given the uncertainty at the Capitol and the legislators' inability to do their job of passing a budget, it means that we at a local level need to be two steps ahead.

Our legislators and local leaders are short-changing our students. It's time for a change.

**4.** I live in Wethersfield with my two sons, Andrew (a kindergartener at Hanmer) and Alexander, along with my wife Kristen, a life-long resident of Wethersfield. I have been employed at Hartford Stage since 2005; during that time I received recognition from the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., as one of



the nation's emerging leaders in making cultural arts programs accessible to people with disabilities of all ages.

I helped establish sensory friendly performances of "A Christmas Carol" at Hartford Stage, allowing individuals with autism or other sensory sensitivities to enjoy theater in a safe and welcoming environment.

I gained my appreciation of

public education from my parents, who were both teachers in the Berlin and Middletown public schools. I was previously elected to the Berlin Board of Education for a three-year term where I served as treasurer for two years and was part of a superintendent search committee.

I believe we can all agree that education is important and that strong public schools are a

major asset to our community.

Our priority must be ensuring that we can provide quality education in a cost-effective way that does not burden the community, but rather enhances it.

With an affordable education system and leaders in place that aren't afraid to jump in, work hard and ask the tough questions, we all win: students, teachers and all residents. **WL**

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# Up and running

Over the Moon Theatre brings live stage shows to town

by Mark Jahne  
Editor

**W**ethersfield has a long history of high-quality live theater at the high school and with its summer teen theater program. But until now there has not been a theatrical option for adults who love to sing and perform.

Over the Moon Theatre is a new community repertory company that recently debuted with its first show, a Broadway review, held in the church hall of Sacred Heart Church in Old Wethersfield. Those involved are pleased with the response and already looking forward to the next show.

Longtime friends and theatrical partners Cindy Lesser of Wethersfield and Kelly Boucher of Enfield are the co-founders of the new theater troop. A frequent contributor as a performer or music director is Michael Gowdy of Wethersfield.

"We started in 2011 as Newington Mainstage," Lesser said.

That collaboration lasted until 2014. Then they started searching for something new.

The pair teamed up with other performers two years ago for a local touring production of "Six Boobs and a Pianist." Act 1 featured several whimsical songs about certain female anatomy and Act 2 was a moving tribute to breast cancer victims and survivors.

Lesser, who formerly lived in Newington, has lived in Wethersfield for several years and saw a void in the performing arts, other than the schools.

"We felt like it would be a good place to resettle the theater group," she said.

She and Boucher share responsibilities on both the business and artistic aspects of their theater company, which is structured as a limited liability corporation. They weren't sure how the first show would work out but Boucher said attendance was higher than expected and that bodes well for the future.

Up next is "Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings," a Christmas-themed musical comedy. Performances are scheduled for 8 p.m. Dec. 14-15 and 2 and 8 p.m. Dec. 16. Tickets are \$25 for general admission and \$22 for students and senior citizens.

Advance tickets may be purchased through a link on the Over the Moon Theatre Facebook page or by calling 860-595-2350. They will also be sold at the door prior to each performance.

The four-man cast of Eric Michael Gray, Tony Leone, Ryan Pipke and Michael Gowdy will also perform during the annual Holidays on Main event on Main Street.

"We want to do a mix of shows. We really enjoy doing cabarets," Boucher said.

The ideal cast will range from two to 10 performers. The plan is to present three shows a year once they become more established. Lesser added that they are not likely to do popular mainstream productions.

"It's expensive to do a big show," she said.

The duo likes the hall at the Hartford Avenue church although they may have to take steps to augment the audio and lighting.

"The space is nice. We set it up cabaret style with tables and chairs," Lesser said. "Old Wethersfield is such an upbeat area."

Patrons were able to bring their own snacks to enjoy during the performance. It's all part of developing a following so that the theatrical company can sustain itself financially.

Both women became involved with theater in their high school days. Lesser loves to sing and has done numerous musicals, musical reviews and once performed with a blues band.

Boucher studied in the MFA program at The Actor's Studio in New York City and a Shakespeare program in Washington, D.C. She has performed several one-woman shows. **WL**

Check out *Over the Moon Theatre* on Facebook and Instagram.



Michael Cartwright

Photos by Lisa Brisson

**"We want to do a mix of shows.  
We really enjoy doing cabarets."**

**-Kelly Boucher**



The cast of "Broadway Now" onstage in the parish hall of Sacred Heart Church.



The cast of "Broadway Now" onstage. They are, from left, Minnett Henry, Lauren Lesser, Allie Lesser, Zane Tinker, Michael Cartwright, Garth West, Kelly Boucher, Cindy Lesser and Rosanne Gowdy.



# Bigger and more visible

Beaver Brook Animal Hospital moves into new building along busy road

by Mark Jahne  
Editor

**B**eaver Brook Animal Hospital did well enough during the six years it occupied space on Beaver Road. But Dr. Howard Asher and Dr. Monica Dijanic were often frustrated when they met people who had no idea where their business was located.

The desire for greater visibility as well as more space led them to build a new veterinary clinic on a vacant lot at 434 Silas Deane Highway. The move and construction

how stressed dogs and cats can become when they are loaded into the car for a trip to see the vet. Dijanic and Asher said the Beaver Brook staff decided to create their new building in what is called the fear-free style.

The concept is to remove as much stress as possible, an approach being undertaken by both dentists and veterinarians nationwide. Multiple steps are required.

"We started about two years ago. It all starts from the initial

**"We have five examination rooms, three treatment tables, a surgery suite and a dental suite."**

**—Dr. Monica Dijanic**

were not without their challenges but both veterinarians are delighted with the result.

They moved the business to its new location in August.

"It was a challenge, but we got through it," Dijanic said.

"It feels a lot better being in here. It's more open," Asher added.

Pet owners know all too well

phone call," Asher said.

All of the rooms in the clinic have copious natural light and are painted in soft pastels and other soothing colors. Species-specific music is piped in. There are perches where cats can look out the window while being treated.

The examination tables can be folded into the wall and animals can



Photo by Mark Jahne

Dr. Howard Asher and Dr. Monica Dijanic are the owners and medical directors of Beaver Brook Animal Hospital.

be examined on the floor if that makes them more comfortable. The result is that pets and people alike seem more relaxed.

The new building is 6,000 square feet and 5,400 of that is working space. It is also more energy-efficient than their prior facility.

Dogs and cats are cared for in separate areas. Beaver Brook offers a full range of pet care including surgical procedures, preventive care, dental care, wellness care, nutritional counseling, alternative therapies such as acupuncture and laser therapy, indoor play areas and more.

"We have five examination rooms,

three treatment tables, a surgery suite and a dental suite," Dijanic said. "We are open seven days a week."

Best of all, people are noticing the business as they drive by on the Silas Deane and the business is gaining new customers as a result. The large sign out front also makes a big difference, both doctors said.

Beaver Brook Animal Hospital is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday. Weekend hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday and 9 a.m. to noon Sunday. **WL**

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# Heroes & Hounds

Resident supports military K9 teams overseas

by Mark Jahne  
Editor

**M**ark Rudewicz loves animals. The Wethersfield resident and retired Hartford police officer now serves as the animal control officer for the Simsbury Police Department, where he spends most of his time responding to calls about wandering black bears.

He's also a former Marine who owns three dogs. Put the two together and it's no surprise that he wants to support military personnel who work with dogs for security, bomb detection and other duties.

That's why he started a nonprofit effort called Heroes and Hounds, not to be confused with other organizations around the country of the same name.

"I like my three dogs more than some humans I know," he said with a laugh.

He collects money and product donations and then packages them up and sends them off to members of the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Navy and Marines who are teamed with four-legged companions. The Simsbury police administration fully supports his efforts.

A figurine of a soldier wearing desert camouflage with a German shepherd sits on his desk at police headquarters.

"I'm going to be sending some vests out to the Middle East," Rudewicz said.

"When you think of what those military dogs accomplish ..."

Some of the vests are designed to help keep the canines cool in the oppressive heat. Other vests provide protection from guns, knives and explosives.

Popular items are dog toys, dog treats, doggie goggles to protect their eyes from sun and sand, and

food for both people and animals.

He sends plenty of plastic chew toys that military dogs can gnaw on to relieve stress.

"People bring in loads of stuff. I've had companies donate. I've had Gold Star and Blue Star Mothers donate to me," Rudewicz said. "It started out as an annual holiday drive."

Gold Star Mothers are those who have lost a military son or daughter in service to their country. Blue Star Mothers have a child who is an active member of one of the five branches of the armed forces or is a member of the National Guard or Reserves.

Rudewicz donates countless nonperishable items to the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines. His connection to the military is strong.

"As a young man I went from high school to the Marine Corps," he said. "For me, it's an honor and a privilege to have a life of service."

His late mother and father were veterans of the U.S. Army. He spent more than 20 years as a police officer in Hartford, at one point supervising both the department's K9 teams and its horse patrol.

Rudewicz wants to do whatever he can to aid and protect military dogs overseas because many of them are assigned to the dangerous work of sniffing out explosives. They often go in ahead of the troops and are in extreme danger as a result.

"Nothing beats the nose of that canine. These dogs have saved countless men and women in the military," he said.

Military protocol dictates that every dog be one rank higher than its human partner. That's intended to remind the human about the importance of his or her furry friend.

Rudewicz estimates that he has already sent 2,000 packages to military personnel stationed overseas.



Courtesy photos

This military dog may appear to be making a fashion statement but sunglasses or goggles are vital to protecting canine eyes in sandy places like Iraq and Afghanistan.



Four Marines and their furry friends display the packages they received from Mark Rudewicz.

When he has enough items to fill a truck he takes them to Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee, Mass., for shipment.

"I've been able to do it directly" because of his military and police connections, which saves time and money. "It's expanded so much."

He hopes to make Heroes and Hounds his full-time avocation when he retires from police work.

Another focus of his donations is

military veterinary units.

"I also donate to a group called American Vet Dogs," he said.

At the height of American military commitment there were more than 300 dogs assigned to active duty in Iraq alone, he added. Rudewicz has received numerous messages of thanks for his efforts.

"We would like to thank you for your contributions during our deployment ... the care packages





**Wethersfield resident Mark Rudewicz prepares to ship boxes of treats and supplies to military K9 teams around the world. He is employed as the animal control officer by the Simsbury Police Department.**

you provided gave my troops a sense of well being and also knowing that someone cares and thinks about them," Staff Sgt. Brian Diggs wrote.

He is the kennel master for a military dog unit designated SOTF-South.

"I just received the awesome care package and wanted to say thank you very much for your kind contribution," MA2 Douglass Hawkins of the U.S. Navy wrote.

He wrote from Afghanistan where he and K9 partner Jacky, a 3-year-old female Belgian Malinois, were serving in December 2011. Jacky is trained in

explosives detection, tracking, scouting and controlled aggression.

"Thank you so much for your thoughtful care packages. We've begun to hand out the goodies and the vests to many of our handlers," Capt. Jessica Huwa of the 72nd Medical Detachment Veterinary Services, stationed at the time in Afghanistan, wrote.

"Your generosity is overwhelming and all of us can't thank you enough." **WL**  
*Anyone interested in making a donation or learning more may contact Rudewicz at 860-658-3110 or 860-995-8957.*



Courtesy photos

**A pair of U.S. Army soldiers and their dog on overseas duty sport Hartford Police Department K9 shirts. Mark Rudewicz is a retired HPD officer and at one point in his career supervised that department's K9 program.**

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Art clockwise: Katherine Simmons (oil), Jane Zisk (acrylic), Ed Hicks (oil)



# Raising money while having fun

Photos by Mark Jahne



John Gerardi and Tammy Ferrauda sell raffle tickets.



Among the guests were, from left, Renee DiNino of 105.9 FM The River, chamber President Alana DiMarco of Wethersfield LIFE and chamber Executive Director Leslie Civitello.



The William Raveis real estate office on the Silas Deane Highway held a combined fundraiser and Business After Hours with the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce the evening of Oct. 5. Realtors Annie Dillon, left, and Tammy Varney are all smiles.



Frank Aksamit came dressed to party.



Erik Sousa encourages guests to participate in the wine pull. Proceeds from the evening went to the Raveis Ride and Walk supporting the Damon Runyan Cancer Research Institute.

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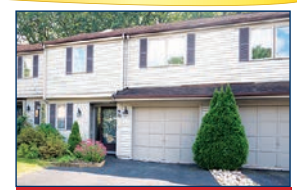
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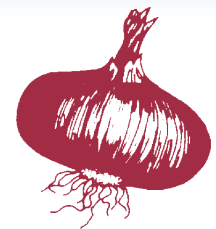




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# News roundup

## It's leaf time again

Town crews will begin the annual curbside leaf removal program Oct. 30 and continue until Dec. 1. Leaves should be raked to the curb, not into the street, in a long row about three feet high.

The town will not make individual spot pickups of leaves. Residents who do not have their leaves raked to curbside by the time of collection in their area must either compost them or take them to the transfer station for free disposal at 100 Marsh St.

Transfer station hours of operation are Monday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. The collection schedule for individual streets and neighborhoods can be found online at [wethersfield.ct.com](http://wethersfield.ct.com). This is dependent upon the weather and subject to change.

## Helping hurricane victims

Wethersfield Country Club hosted a charity golf tournament Sept. 16 in conjunction with Tito's Handmade Vodka to raise funds for victims of the recent hurricanes in Texas and Florida. Club Vice President Steve Kirsche, Frank LaTorra of Tito's and

Mayor Paul Montinieri, who is also club president, hold the oversized check.

## Soccer players paint stones

Members of the Wethersfield Vipers U-11 girls soccer team took a break from practice to paint rocks that will be placed at various parks and other public locations in town. Each stone bears an inspirational message or greeting of friendship.

## EMTs keep busy

Emergency medical technicians with the Wethersfield Volunteer Ambulance Association transported 85 patients to the hospital during the month of September. Twenty-eight of those were advanced life support transports.

WVAA members gave 1,475 volunteer hours to serve the town during that month. They also presented a free EMT class to four Wethersfield High School students.

## Kevin enters the race

It's official – Kevin the turkey has thrown his feathers into the ring and is running for election as mayor of Wethersfield. The increasingly popular bird has placed signs such as this one seen



Kevin enters the race

on Griswold Road around town to promote his candidacy.

His political platform has three main planks: reducing traffic at his favorite intersections, encouraging residents to donate to the town food bank, and encouraging everyone to opt for a vegetarian Thanksgiving dinner and leave his species off the menu.

The MOMS Club of Wethersfield has donated a Little Free Library to the Mikey's Place playground. People are encouraged to visit it to take a book, leave a book, or sit and enjoy a story during a visit to the playground. Jenny Lentino coordinated this effort. **WL**



Soccer players paint stones



Helping hurricane victims



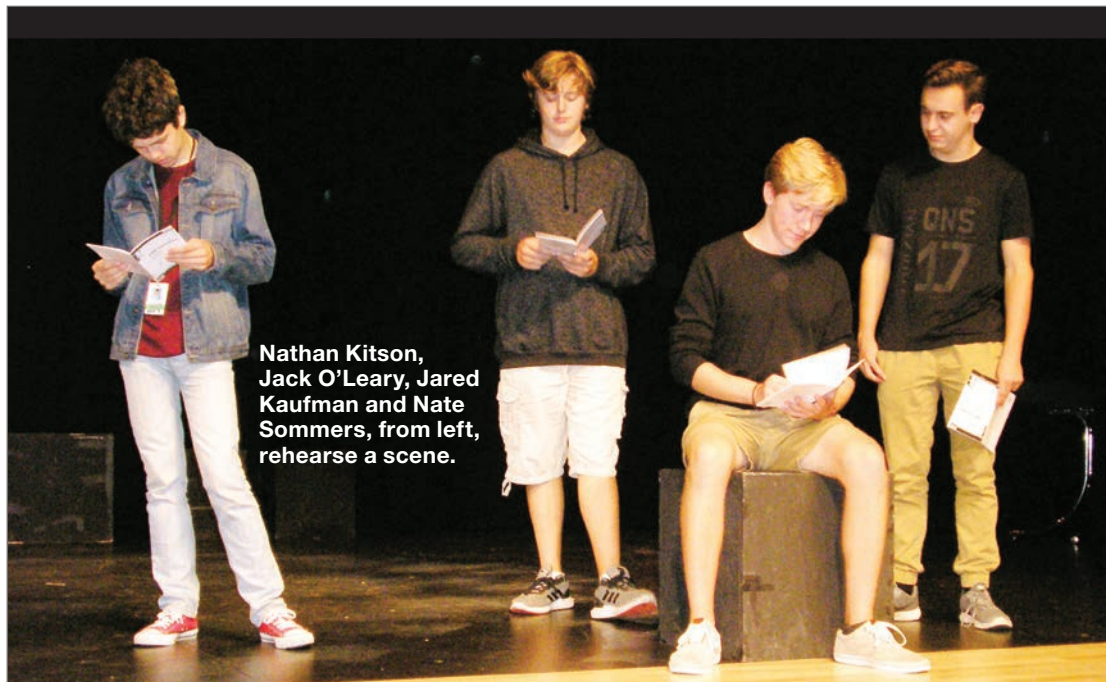
Moms created library

Photo by Mark Janne

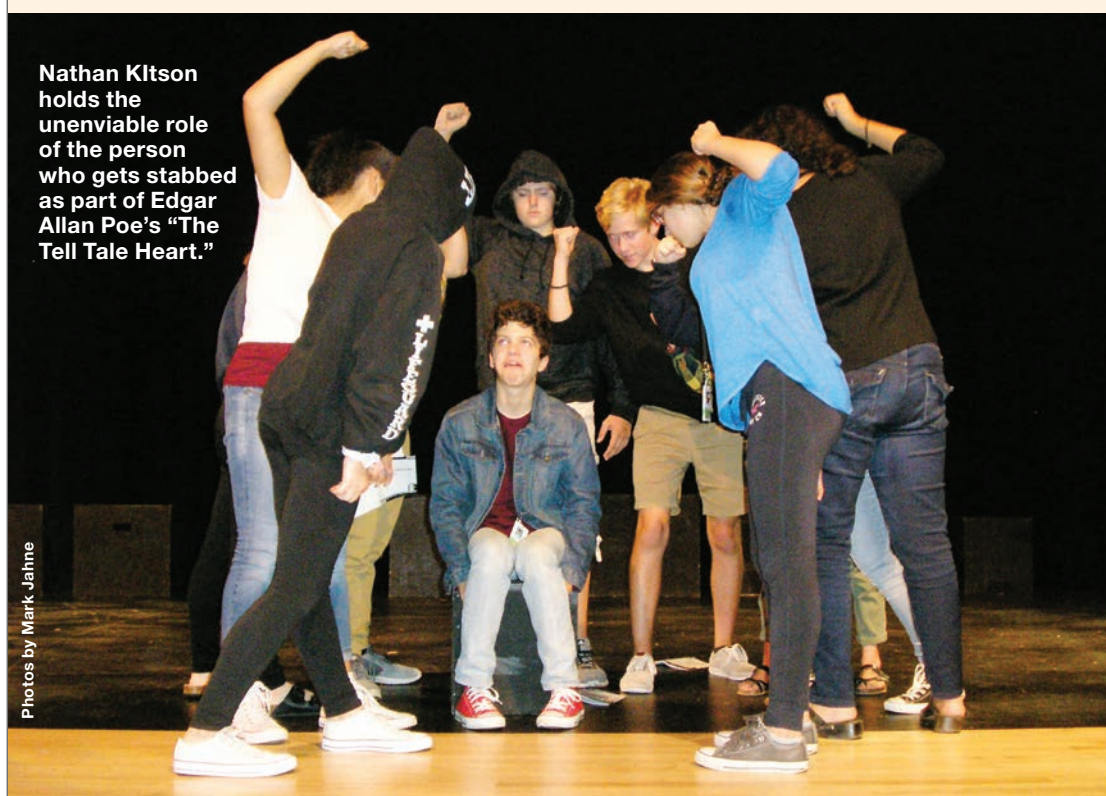
Photo by Mark Janne

Courtesy photos





Nathan Kitson, Jack O'Leary, Jared Kaufman and Nate Sommers, from left, rehearse a scene.



Nathan Kitson holds the unenviable role of the person who gets stabbed as part of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell Tale Heart."

Photos by Mark Jahne

# It's almost Halloween

High school students will present spooky and seasonal one-act plays

by Mark Jahne  
Editor

**H**alloween is a spooky time of year and the drama group at Wethersfield High School is embracing the season on stage.

WHS students will perform a grouping of four one-act plays at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 3-4 in the high school auditorium. A cast of 18 students will present "The Shuddering Season" including "Shuddersome" – a retelling of four Edgar Allan Poe stories – Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow."

These plays are all Halloween themed. The fourth play, "Pumpkin Pie," was written by WHS junior Kate Ayers as a 2016 submission to the Hartford Stage's "Write

On" playwright festival. Her work was chosen as one of five winners out of 32 submissions and was performed at Hartford Stage.

She is now in the process of writing a book and has published short stories and poetry. "Pumpkin Pie" takes a wry look at a family's Thanksgiving gathering.

"It's a comedy about a dysfunctional family's Thanksgiving dinner," Kate said. "This is a first-time thing for me. I've always loved to write."

Her play is approximately 15 minutes long. She gives credit to English teacher Marc Pfister for encouraging her to contact Jeff Roets, another teacher who oversees all of the productions on the new auditorium stage.



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## "It's a comedy about a dysfunctional family's Thanksgiving dinner."

—Kate Ayers

Roets was thrilled to hear from her and immediately agreed to produce the play. He said he loves getting scripts from students. The performers encouraged him to select the Poe works because of their spooky nature.

"I wanted to let them have some fun with it," he said.

He added that other than "Pumpkin Pie" the other one-act plays are all part of the curriculum in the WHS English Department.

Kate said it helps that she knows most of the students involved in the drama group and that makes it easier for her to direct their efforts.

"It's strange because I'm not the type of person to tell them what to do," she said.

The nature of the comedy is based upon her own family's holiday experiences. She suspects many others have had similar experiences.

"I feel like people could relate to that," she said.

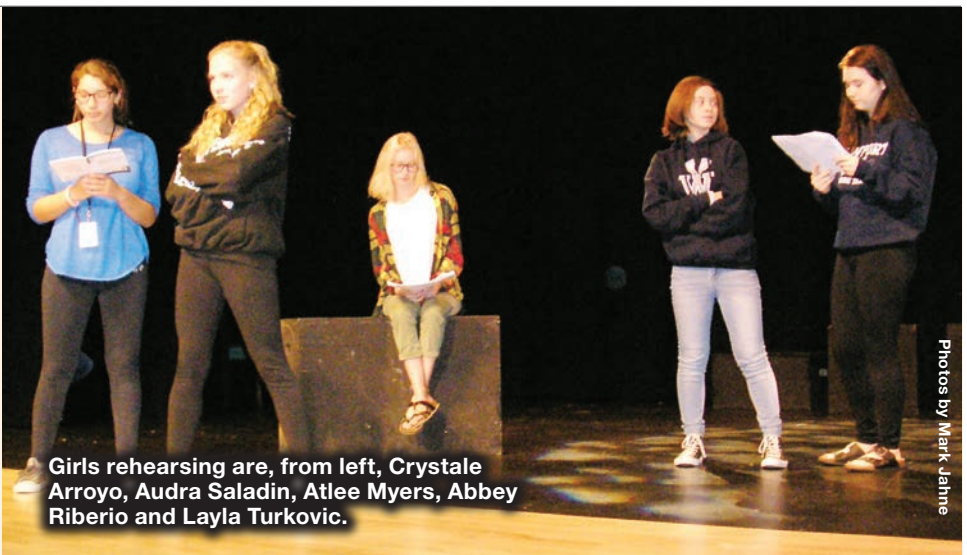
The individual Edgar Allan Poe plays that are part of the show include "The Raven," "The Tell Tale Heart" and "Mask of Red Death." A chorus called the Shutters will accompany the performances.

Roets referred to them with a smile as seasonally unsettling.

"If we do it right, we should be able to run all three of these in 45 minutes," he said.

The entire evening should be about 90 minutes in duration.

The set is minimal and students



Girls rehearsing are, from left, Crystale Arroyo, Audra Saladin, Atlee Myers, Abbey Riberio and Layla Turkovic.

Photos by Mark Janne

are assisting with lighting.

Roets said this might be the only WHS dramatic production this academic year. The annual spring musical is on hold pending budget cuts the town may have to enact if state aid to municipalities and schools is cut as part of the state budget process. **WL**

*Tickets will be sold at the door. General admission is \$10, \$5 for students and senior citizens. For more information call 860-721-9075.*



Kate Ayers wrote and will direct two performances of "Pumpkin Pie" at Wethersfield High School.

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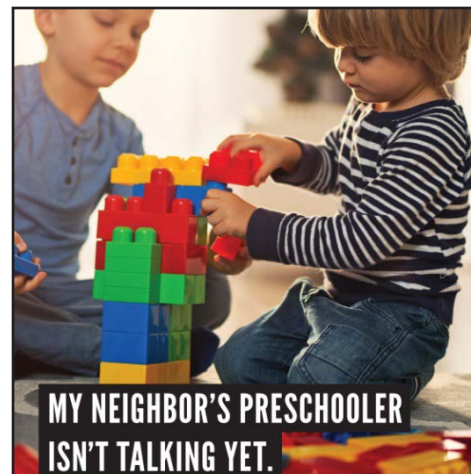
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## Living your Best LIFE

# A walking town directory

Elaine St. Onge is devoted to the Wethersfield Historical Society

by Mara Dresner  
Staff Writer



Wethersfield artist Phil Lohman created this caricature of Elaine St. Onge when she retired from the Wethersfield Historical Society. St. Onge is still an active volunteer.

Teaching may have been her first career, but a lifelong love of antiques brought Elaine St. Onge to the Wethersfield Historical Society. She has donated countless hours of her time as a volunteer, as well as working for a number of years as an employee.

St. Onge first moved to town in 1964 with her late husband, Daniel St. Onge Sr., teaching fourth and fifth grade at Emerson-Williams School until 1971, when she stayed home to raise a family.

“At that point, it wasn’t as likely for women to return to work,” she said. “I always said if I’d gone back to it after I had children, I’d be a better teacher.”

She had friends who belonged to the historical society and they invited the young couple to come hear a talk by George Michael, a well-known PBS personality and antiques expert.

After the event, her friend called her to see if she would like to be involved in the organization.

“She said, ‘How would you like to be secretary on the governing

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## Living your Best LIFE

board?' I thought, 'What?'" St. Onge remembered with a smile.

She agreed and became corresponding secretary in 1971 and stayed on the board until 1987. But that's hardly the full story of her involvement with the society.

She eventually went to work for WHS as its first employee besides the full-time director in the fall of 1980, working eight hours a week as a secretary.

"It was the first position they opened. I had a friend who had the job for two months, but she couldn't do it

tion. We got all the dealers, we got the place ready. I loved it. It got harder to recruit dealers and you can't do it if you don't get enough dealers," she said.

"It was a lovely show. The dealers liked the atmosphere. They liked the way they were treated. This year, it wasn't possible."

She also has served on various committees, such as the collections committee, helping to prepare exhibits, as well as assisting with the craft show and volunteering for the Lantern Light Tours.

After her husband died

***"I knew so many of the members. They still call me the institutional memory. The personal touch still matters."***

**—Elaine St. Onge**

with her other job," she said.

After making sure it wouldn't be a conflict of interest with her role on the governing board, she got to work.

"I loved it. I loved the antiques, the chance to work with the collections," St. Onge said. "I would be there to answer phones, to welcome visitors. I didn't even have a computer at that point. I had a typewriter."

St. Onge retired in December 2013.

"They couldn't fire me; I knew where all the toilet paper was," she said with a laugh. "I knew so many of the members. They still call me the institutional memory. The personal touch still matters."

She's back on the governing board and for several years served as manager of the annual antiques show, which is not being held this year.

"That was my big contribu-

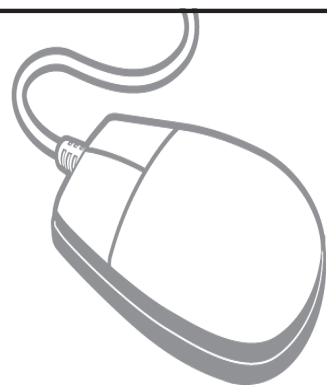
tion. We got all the dealers, we got the place ready. I loved it. It got harder to recruit dealers and you can't do it if you don't get enough dealers," she said.

"I was widowed in 2001, Wes was widowed in 2004. We knew each other. We went to the same church. He belonged to the historical society and we got married. We've been married for 11 years," she said.

It's at the First Church of Christ in Wethersfield that St. Onge started another passion, a prayer shawl ministry that she began in 2003.

"It's a ministry in which we have group of women who meet once a month who make prayer shawls that are given to people who are grieving or ill or undergoing chemotherapy, for any number of reasons. Sometimes they're given out personally to friends and relatives, sometimes to a member of the church," she said.

"We always keep them on



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## Living your Best LIFE

hand and keep them at the church. They go with a letter that explains that as they wrap themselves, God loves them and they're being prayed for. It gives a measure of comfort."

St. Onge first read an article about a program that originated at the Hartford Seminary after her husband died.

"I called them on the phone and I thought, 'I could do that. I could run a group like that.' So then I took the proposal to our minister's wife and said, 'I have an idea for a program that I think would be nice in our church,'" she said.

The minister's wife was surprised that St. Onge actually wanted to lead the group herself. Most members of the group knit, although some crochet.

"As a group, we say a prayer together at the beginning of the meeting and we say prayer for the shawls that are finished. I say a prayer that this will help alleviate

their stresses. I pray as I'm knitting that it will be helpful for somebody," she said.

"You don't have any idea when you're knitting it the affect it will have on people but we get notes back from people who have received the shawls. It's transformative for some people. Just the fact that somebody cared enough. It's wondrous. I don't question it. People are really helped by it; that's wonderful."

St. Onge has also helped get two similar groups started at Corpus Christi Church in Wethersfield and St. Elizabeth Seton in Rocky Hill.

She's also involved with the group that helps preserve the Griswoldville Chapel, served on the town's Tourism Commission for a decade and is involved with a garden club.

**Elaine St. Onge poses in front of a Margolis highboy that was made in Hartford in the early 20th century.**



Photo by Mara Dresner

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## Living your Best LIFE

"I'm not the greatest gardener anymore; I can't get down and up. I had two replaced hips and a replaced knee, so it makes doing it a bit harder," she said.

She does a bit of planning and supervises her husband on some of the gardening tasks.

"I like perennials, I like things I can count on to come up every year."

They have transplanted a number of plants to their summer place in Sturbridge, Mass. She belongs to a book club, reading a mix of fiction and nonfiction.

**Elaine St. Onge was corresponding secretary for the 1971-72 Wethersfield Historical Society Governing Board.**

**Shown are, standing from left, Dick Cooley, Sam (Toby) Huntington, Wellington (Welly) Macdonough, Sam Wax, Leon McNelly, Dick Foxall, Gene Lesserson and Buz Willard; seated, from left, are Nancy Stokes, Mrs. Otis Miller, Eleanor Buck Wolf, Anne Kuckro, Elaine St. Onge and Lois Weider.**



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## Living *your Best* LIFE

"I've always got a book going, but never two, because that's too complicated. That's mainly the gifts the kids give us at Christmas," she said.

She's especially partial to mysteries, with favorite authors including Sue Grafton, Elizabeth George and Louise Penny.

She also belongs to a bridge club, a game she started playing while an undergraduate at the University of Massachusetts.

"I was a counselor on a floor and playing bridge was a good way to know girls on the floor. My future husband Dan was at the time a terrific bridge player and he taught me to play good bridge. It was a good ice breaker," she said.

While she has numerous interests, it's clear that antiques hold a special place in her heart.

"My father made furniture occasionally and I have some of the pieces he made," she said. "[Dan and I] started just for fun going to

some auctions when we were newly married and living in an apartment in Wethersfield."

They would find things and fix them up and began selling them.

"We kind of became unofficial dealers and then we started doing

the basement for many years, E.R. St. Onge Antiques."

She carried a variety of 18th and 19th century furniture and accessories.

"Wes had to make room for me and all my stuff when I moved

society. When she retired, they dedicated the place to her, now known as the Elaine St. Onge Office.

"She does so much for us. Elaine is highly organized and unflappable and always retains her sense of humor in any situation. Elaine knows so many people in town and so many people know her; she's like a walking town directory," Executive Director Amy Northrop Wittorff said.

"Elaine has been one of those wonderful anchors to the community for so many years. Elaine is the face of the historical society for many people," she added.

"There's a wonderful caricature that Phil Lohman drew of her, juggling a dozen different things with a twinkle on her eye. Elaine has a wonderful ability to accomplish amazing things, always with a smile and good humor." **WL**

**"Elaine knows so many people in town and so many people know her; she's like a walking town directory."**

**—Amy Northrop Wittorff**

some shows. Even when we had children, we would do four or five shows in the summer," she said.

"Then when he was more wheelchair ridden, I would go to the shows. I had an antique shop in

here. There was a lot of stuff in the basement and I refused to get rid of it," she said.

That love of antiques and history comes through with the work she does at the historical

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## EDUCATION

# LIFE

*in the classroom*

## Webb School students go ga-ga over new exercise pit

by Mark Jahne  
Editor

**W**ebb School got the 2017-2018 academic year off to a fast start with several new initiatives in and out of the classroom. The idea is to concentrate efforts on improving the entire child, not just the child's mind.

"One of the things that we're focusing on this year is the whole child. We have mindfulness once a week now," Principal Michael Verderame said.

Webb School students play in the new Ga-Ga pit installed on the playground. They try to strike each other with a soft blue ball that can only be propelled by the hands, not kicked or thrown. Contact must be made below the waist.

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## EDUCATION

The school also installed a new play space called a Ga-Ga Pit, donated by the PTO. The octagonal arena doesn't come with a famous sequin-clad singer, but everyone seems to be enjoying it nonetheless.

"It's a striking game that is kinder and gentler than volleyball," physical education teacher Mary Gothers said. "We just started this."

Students chase a soft ball that they may only hit with one or two hands. They cannot throw or kick it and are instructed to aim below the waist. If another student is touched by the ball in that fashion he or she must leave the pit and get in line for eventual return.

Ten students are allowed in the pit at a time. No one seems to mind getting knocked out because they are back in within a minute or two.

Gothers said that while the students focus upon how much fun they are having they also are getting good exercise from jumping, dodging, striking and moving. The game also teaches good sportsmanship, cooperation and accepting

without argument the decision of a judge – usually a teacher – who determines who stays in and who must leave the pit.

"This game is fun, it gets kids moving, and it's simple. It's had a great effect," she added.

The idea to acquire and install the Ga-Ga Pit is credited to PTO member Christine Mori.

**"It's an awesome event. It's a chance to get out of your comfort zone and make a new friend."**

**–Liz D'Amato**

"This PTO is amazing. They've been totally supportive," Gothers said.

The parent organization also funded her trip to a national convention of physical education teachers in Boston.

Other activities thus far include the annual Walk to School Day Oct. 4 in which more than 300 students

participated along with parents, teachers and other adults. A program was held to combat bullying and on Mix It Up Day on Oct. 25 students were encouraged to share a lunch table with someone other than their usual circle of friends.

School Psychologist Liz D'Amato and Social Worker Melissa Perry spoke about these and other

All of the students made pinwheels of peace that were placed outside the main entrance to Webb. The month of October is being celebrated as anti-bullying month with daily announcements and a pledge board students are encouraged to sign stating that they will not bully another child.

D'Amato spoke about Mix It Up Day.

"It's an awesome event. It's a chance to get out of your comfort zone and make a new friend," she said.

Another initiative is called PBIS: Positive Behaviors Interventions and Supports. Students can earn Webb Way To Be reward cards that bring various benefits to their classrooms.

The school is planning to conduct a food drive in November to benefit the town's food pantry. That fits in with the civics component of a Wethersfield Public Schools education.

"We have a civics goal as part of our school improvement plan,"

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## EDUCATION

Perry said.

Educator Jen Zehler visits the school on a weekly basis to lead the mindfulness component of a Webb education. She is the director of the Center for Children's Spirituality that is part of the Trinity Institute for Applied Neuroscience and Spirituality, a nonprofit organization.

"I'm a former public school teacher in Hartford," she said. "As a teacher there I began to bring mindfulness lessons into my classroom. This is my second year here. Last year was a pilot year."

She taught for seven years at the Breakthrough Magnet School.

Although spirituality is part of her practice, she does not promote any specific religious or other belief. Her approach is simply to help students understand that they have a connection to something greater than themselves, whatever that may be.

"It's about realizing the inter-connection we have with each other. It's not just about me, it's about we," Zehler said. "I'm helping to integrate

mindfulness and restorative practices in the classrooms. Restorative practices are about building community."

She emphasized that this is not some kind of a magic fix when challenges occur, but rather teaching the students a way of relating to themselves, others and the world at large.

"We practice mindfulness in a variety of ways. It's an inner education and an outer education," Zehler said. "It's really a very empowering tool for young people. It's an invitation, never a demand."

Everyone sits in a circle on the floor, including Zehler and the teachers. They close their eyes and become more aware of sounds, breath, thoughts, emotions and movement.

She adapts her program to the needs of each classroom. Zehler said students need to be comfortable with the idea of participating in the program on any given day and are always offered an alternative activity if they are not.



Photo by Mark Jahne

She emphasized that mindfulness is responsive, not reactive, and serves to connect the mind, body and heart. Her hope is that the students will grasp the lessons they learn and evolve in this as they grow older.

"Mindfulness has transformed my own life," Zehler said. "No one ever told me it was important to

love myself."

She grew up within the state's foster care system. She also teaches these lessons at Silas Deane Middle School.

New to her program at Webb this year is reflective writing. Sixth-graders will receive what she calls gratitude journals at the end of the academic year. **WL**

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# Slice of LIFE

photos by Mark Jahne



## Scarecrows Along Main

The popular Scarecrows Along Main exhibit is back for another season. Once again, local residents, schools and other organizations are showing off their creative abilities. As predicted, among the entries are at least two that are themed upon Kevin the wild turkey. **1.** This creation by students at Charles Wright School pays tribute to two members of the school community who are fighting cancer. The board contains notes of support and positive wishes. **2.** There's no label so we're not sure who this man outside Lucky Lou's represents. Maybe Inspector Clouseau of "Pink Panther" fame was in the marching band at Wethersfield High School? **3.** These scarecrows depict students at Corpus Christi School. **4.** Second-graders at Hanmer School get the credit for this assemblage of emojis. **5.** This scarecrow welcomes people to Kevin's Garden at the intersection of Church and Main. **6.** Kevin the increasingly famous turkey offers a suggestion for a different Thanksgiving entrée. He can be found in front of Chester Bulkley Bed & Breakfast. **7.** The Webb School Wildcat relaxes on a bench in front of the Wethersfield Historical Society. **8.** This seasonal waiter welcomes diners to the outdoor patio at Lucky Lou's. **9.** A scary clown welcomes diners to the Old Town Restaurant. **10.** A surveyor checks out the grounds in front of Heirloom Market at Comstock Ferre. **11.** Whatever is in this water cooler, don't drink it. **12.** George Washington welcomes visitors to the Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum.







# November *calendar*

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## 1 Bud & Blossom Garden

**Club**, 6:30 p.m., Pitkin

Community Center, 30

Greenfield St., Room S-2

## 2 Wethersfield

**Chamber of Commerce**

**BBQ & Beer**, 5:30-9 p.m.,

Webb Barn, 211 Main St., \$35

per person, wethersfield@sbc-global.net

## 4 Friends of the Library

**Book Sale**, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.,

Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas

Deane Highway, 860-257-2811

or wethersfieldlibrary.org, also

1-4 p.m. Nov. 5

**Golden Oldies Concert**

**with Sal Basile**, 7 p.m.,

Trinity Episcopal Church

parish hall, 300 Main St., \$10

admission, 860-529-6825

## 8 Microsoft Word

**Basics**, 10:30 a.m., registra-

tion required, Wethersfield

Library, 515 Silas Deane

Highway, 860-257-2811 or

wethersfieldlibrary.org, also

6:30 p.m. Nov. 13

## 9 Birds in Colored

**Pencils Class**, 6 p.m., regis-

tration required, Wethersfield

Library, 515 Silas Deane

Highway, 860-257-2811 or

wethersfieldlibrary.org

## 10 Veterans Day

**Ceremony**, 11 a.m., Town

Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway

## 11 Saturday Cinema:

**“Hacksaw Ridge,”** 1:30 p.m.,

Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas

Deane Highway, 860-257-2811

or wethersfieldlibrary.org

**150 Prospect Coffeehouse**,

6:30 p.m., Wethersfield United

Methodist Church, 150

Prospect St., 860-614-5158 or

tanjam@comcast.net

## 16 Group Poetry

**Reading by Artemis Rising**,

6:30 p.m., registration

required, Wethersfield Library,

515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-

257-2811 or wethersfieldli-

brary.org

## 17 Icing on the Cake

**with Jan**, 2:30 p.m., for grades

7-12, registration required,

Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas

Deane Highway, 860-257-2811

or wethersfieldlibrary.org

## 18 Ye Olde Sugar

**Plum Fair**, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.,

Trinity Episcopal Church,

300 Main St., 860-529-6825

## 21 Teen Comic

**Construction**, 2:30 p.m.,

for grades 7-12, registration

required, Wethersfield Library,

515 Silas Deane Highway,

860-257-2811 or wethersfieldli-

brary.org

## 22 Computer Class:

**OverDrive & Libby**, 10:30

a.m., registration required,

Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas

Deane Highway, 860-257-2811

or wethersfieldlibrary.org, also

6:30 p.m. Nov. 27

## 28 Teen Origami

2:30 p.m., for grades 7-12,

registration required,

Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas

Deane Highway, 860-257-2811

or wethersfieldlibrary.org

**GFWC Newington/**

**Wethersfield Woman’s**

**Club**, 6 p.m., Newington

Rapid Recovery Center, 240

Church St., 860-667-2256

*Is your club, community organization, school or house of worship holding an event open to the general public? If so, please send us the details for inclusion in our calendar.*

*Email your events to Mark*

*Jahne at [mjahne@turleyct.com](mailto:mjahne@turleyct.com)*

*or mail them to Turley CT*

*Community Publications,*

*540 Hopmeadow St.,*

*Simsbury, CT 06070.*



# Events *spotlight*

## Friends of the Library Book Sale

Nov. 4-5

Wethersfield Library  
515 Silas Deane Highway  
860-257-2811 or  
[wethersfieldlibrary.org](http://wethersfieldlibrary.org)

The Friends of the Wethersfield Library present their annual fall book sale from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Nov. 4 and 1-4 p.m. Nov. 5. There will be a large selection of books, CDs and DVDs in numerous categories including children, biography, mystery and cookbooks. Sunday only, patrons can buy a bag and fill it for

\$5. Admission is free. A special preview night will be held from 5-8 p.m. Nov. 2 for those who want a first shot at the sale; admission to the preview is \$5.

## Birds in Colored Pencils

Nov. 7, 6 p.m.

Wethersfield Library  
515 Silas Deane Highway  
860-257-2811 or  
[wethersfieldlibrary.org](http://wethersfieldlibrary.org)

The library hosts Birds in Colored Pencils with instructor Nick Frasco. This step-by-step drawing class will include a dose

of natural history with topics on positioning, shaping, squinting, finishing, color blending and much more. No previous art experience is needed and materials will be supplied. Registration is required.

## Veterans Day Ceremony

Nov. 10, 11 a.m.

Town Hall

505 Silas Deane Highway

The town will conduct its annual ceremony honoring all military veterans in front of town hall. It includes participation by members of the Wethersfield High School Band, Boy Scouts, police and fire departments. Representative of the American Legion and Disabled

American Veterans will also be there, as well as invited dignitaries. This event is sponsored by the Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Department, American Legion Post 23 and Disabled American Veterans.

## Ye Olde Sugar Plum Fair

Nov. 18, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Trinity Episcopal Church

300 Main St., 860-529-6825

This traditional holiday fair features handmade gifts, Christmas collectibles, hand-carved crosses, baked goods, books and puzzles, jewelry and special gifts, a pet boutique and poinsettias. There will also be a food court. **WL**

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# Is the Flag Still There?



During the unsuccessful bombardment of Fort McHenry by the British warships (Sept. 13-14, 1814), Francis Scott Key was inspired by the sight of the **American Flag** still flying. He wrote the words that were later set to music to become our National Anthem: "O say does that **star-spangled banner still wave**, over the land of the free, and the home of the brave."

Our flag and National Anthem represent our **Declaration of Independence** and our **Constitution**. **Failure to honor and to understand this relationship makes for and encourages the present movement towards socialism**, etc. When people seek to work out their problems or grievances **by attacking the structure of the ship they are on** out in the ocean, **such is destructive folly**. Doing so **ignorantly or willfully** makes for **personal and public loss**.

## REMEMBER THE 31-WORD PLEDGE:

**I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE...** I am **RESPONSIBLE** as an **INDIVIDUAL** not to take our freedom for granted and thus to risk losing it.

**...AND TO THE REPUBLIC FOR WHICH IT STANDS...** **Not** a **DEMOCRACY** (Rule by the Ruled) but a **REPUBLIC** (a Constitutional Republic governed by law where I am represented). The word **DEMOCRACY** does not appear in our documents of **LIBERTY** (The Declaration of Independence, The Articles of Confederation, the Constitution or the Bill of Rights).

**...ONE NATION, UNDER GOD...** our right to know that **LIFE** and **LIBERTY** are **GOD-GIVEN RIGHTS**, not the **GRANT** of **GOVERNMENT**. Our Constitution gives us a government limited to the delegated authority that **"WE THE PEOPLE"** allotted to each branch of civil government.

**...WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL...** **LIBERTY** is the love of individual independence, being free from tyrannical rule and control— a **LIBERTY** that does not degenerate into license. The Liberty Bell and the Statue of Liberty are fitting symbols. **JUSTICE** is "the virtue which consists in **GIVING TO EVERYONE WHAT IS HIS DUE**." Thus justice calls for law and equity, right rules and fair play for all. This explains the once prevailing concept in America— **PUNISHMENT TO FIT THE CRIME**.

To lose the meaning of **OUR FLAG** is to encourage the loss of our Republican form of government and our God-given, responsible pursuit of **LIFE** and **LIBERTY**.

**"REMEMBER, O LORD**, Thy tender mercies and Thy loving kindnesses; for they have been ever of old. **REMEMBER** not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to Thy mercy **REMEMBER** Thou me for Thy goodness' sake, O **LORD**." (Psalm 25:6-7). "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the **LORD** pitieth them that fear Him. For he knoweth our frame; **HE REMEMBERETH** that we are dust" (Psalm 103:13,14). **"REMEMBER ME, O LORD**, with the favour that Thou bearest unto they people. O visit me with Thy salvation" (Psalm 106:4).

May you be **BOTHERED** to the point of being **BLESSED**. May our **GRAND OLD FLAG** remind us of our great American **HERITAGE**, "one nation **under God**" without Whose grace we cannot survive the erosion and corrosion of our day. May you look to the **GOD OF TRUTH** in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ (who said, "I am **THE TRUTH**"— John 14:6), so that you might **REST** in the **TRUTH** of God's Word ("the **TRUTH** shall make you free"— John 8:32) and the **TRUTH** of God's Son ("the **SON** shall make you free"—John 8:36). To **RECEIVE HIM** is to receive the **LIFE** and **LIBERTY** He alone can give (John 1:12).

## Middletown Bible Church

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# People notes



Isabelle Raymond

**Isabelle Raymond**, a student at Kingswood Oxford School, is performing an internship at Torigen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., a company that specializes in immunotherapy for animals with cancer.

**Second Lt. Nicholas Tallo** is a distinguished graduate of the Marine Artillery Officer Basic Course 7-16 and Joint Fires Observer Course. He was deployed earlier this year with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit in the South Pacific, where he is serving as the mortars platoon commander.

**Daniel Murray** graduated summa cum laude from Western New England University with a bachelor of science degree in mechanical engineering. He was named to the president's list every semester and is a member of Alpha Lambda Delta and Tau Beta Pi honor societies. He is now employed as a design engineer.

Wethersfield residents **Gloria Stalphy, Holly Landers, Carla Corcoran and Missy Kohlhepp** are among the members of the Sounds of New England Chorus who will perform Nov. 4 at the Mandell Jewish Community Center in West Hartford.

**Mary-Kathryn Rogers**, formerly of Wethersfield, was named to the dean's list at Providence College.

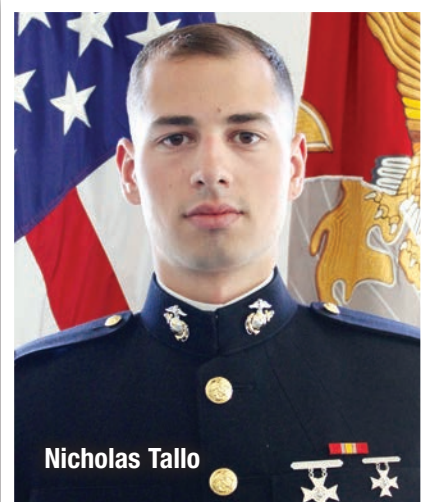
**Joann Chen** earned a graduate degree in accounting from Eastern Connecticut State University.

**Dane Dudley**, a partner at Day Pitney, was recognized by Best Lawyers as the 2018 lawyer of the year for trusts and estates in the Hartford region. He will be highlighted in the 24th edition of "The Best Lawyers in America."

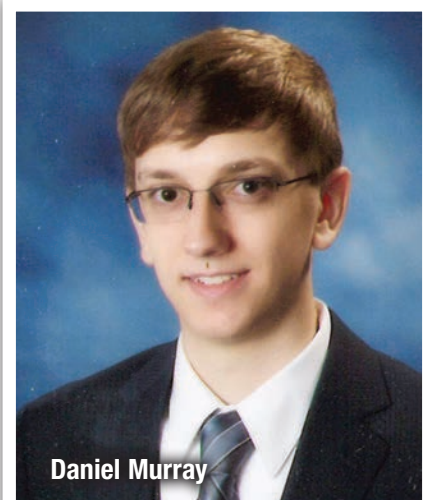
**Tyler Janssen** graduated with a degree in economics from Bates College.

**Alaina Kendrick** is spending the fall semester abroad at Assumption College's Rome campus.

**Hannah Sisson** was named to the honors list at Fairleigh Dickinson University's Florham Campus. She was also inducted into FDU's Phi Omega Epsilon honor society. **WL**



Nicholas Tallo



Daniel Murray



# Letters

## Democrats are his choice

### To the Editor:

As a former mayor of Wethersfield, one that has stayed active in the community for almost 50 years, and as a member of the Democratic Screening Committee, I believe I am duly qualified to recommend that the citizens of Wethersfield vote for the Democratic slate endorsed by this committee.

In the often turbulent and chaotic world in which we live, it is imperative that we select people that will work diligently to serve for the good of all Wethersfield residents. I know that the Democratic team will do just that. The candidates that are running on the Democratic ticket have the values and experience to keep Wethersfield moving forward.

Please join me on Nov. 7 in voting for Town Council candidates Amy Morrin Bello, Mary Breton, Matthew Forrest, Ken Lesser, Tony Martino and Anthony Spinella and for Board of Education candidates Kevin Hill, Ginger McCurdy, Polly Moon and Elaine Steinmiller-Paradise.

—Dan Camilliere

## Pelletier will make positive change

### To the Editor:

I have served with Mary Pelletier on both the Charter Revision Commission and as a commissioner on the Wethersfield Housing Authority Board. Her service on the charter commission and her continuing work on the authority has given me a tremendous amount of respect for how this lady deals with very tough issues.

For those who knew Chiefs McAuliffe and Knapp, you knew them to be advocates for the good of our great town. They served on the charter revision with us and were stalwarts on every issue, with their focus being what is best for Wethersfield.

I will tell you they agreed with every position Mary took on issues, one of the most important being the strengthening of our charter on ethics. Mary led the charge to improve our town constitution by enacting stricter standards and there was

some opposition she managed very smoothly, with the chiefs as her biggest allies.

The housing authority is a very important part of our town and as one of five commissioners she has helped to offer our less fortunate clean and respectable housing at an affordable rate. I have seen her probe and ask questions we hadn't even thought of before, with excellent outcomes.

Her vision is that government is important, but not the answer to many of our issues, that fundamental freedoms should not be taken away, and that serving is an honorable endeavor. With Donna [Hemmann] and Paul [Montinieri] both retiring from the council, there might be a leadership vacuum, but if we elect Mary the town we all love will continue to be in good hands.

—Steve Kirsche

Former Town Councilor

## Forrest gets his vote

### To the Editor:

I know Matthew Forrest as president of the Wethersfield Business Networking group that meets at Wethersfield Country Club. I'm an immigrant who legally obtained my green card, became a U.S. citizen in October 2015 and started my own IT firm here in Wethersfield.

Matthew has not only been one of the most open and welcoming people I have met in town, but he genuinely wants my family and firm to thrive here in Wethersfield. He is always introducing me to local businesses that both need my help and I need to do business with them.

His ability to show me the positive attributes of town have led me to realize that there is no other place I want to grow a business but here in Wethersfield. Its welcoming business culture, its geographic advantage, and his ideas for future business prosperity is something that Matthew grasps and makes me hopeful that he will be elected overwhelmingly as a leader of this town.

Few leaders come with this background. At times like this, we need this guy.

—Youssef Karami

## Rell deserves another term

### To the Editor:

As this November's election in Wethersfield approaches, I wanted to take a minute to express my support for Town Councilman Mike Rell. Mike has been an asset to our town while on the Town Council these past two terms.

As a voice for many residents, Mike and his fellow Republicans on the council raised their concerns about Wethersfield's spending and corresponding taxes being too high. The budget stalemate in Hartford has left many residents feeling that the lack of a state budget will only result in higher property taxes. We cannot afford anymore tax increases. Families in our town are maxed out.

We need officials on our council to put the breaks on these increases. I believe wholeheartedly Mike is that voice and will continue to be in the future.

Mike is also someone who cares deeply about Wethersfield and its residents. Mike and his family are active in youth sports here in town. There isn't a season that he's not on the sidelines cheering on his children.

He is also busy at sporting functions reaching out to fellow parents and asking them how they feel the town is doing. Simply put, Mike isn't someone who just sits on the sidelines, he's someone who listens and gets things done.

That's the kind of guy Mike is, he puts Wethersfield folks first.

—Kristin Cardany

## Democrats stand out

### To the Editor:

There are three compelling reasons to vote for the Wethersfield Democrats on Nov. 7. Integrity – Wethersfield Democrats are honest, honorable and trustworthy, always putting the needs of the town and community first.

Record of achievement – Democratic leadership on the Town Council and the Board of Education has resulted in impressive gains for our local economy and schools. New retail and residential projects are taking place in every area of town.

This notable growth is the direct

result of the Wethersfield Democrats' proactive approach to economic development. Wethersfield schools are safe, class sizes are reasonable, test scores are improving and graduation rates are soaring.

Vision – Wethersfield Democrats have the right vision to keep Wethersfield moving forward. Among their many priorities they support the environment insisting on clean water in the Wethersfield Cove, speaking against tree removal at Brainard Airport and promoting energy conservation measures. They support our children, funding the Wethersfield Early Childhood Collaborative, the Transition Academy and new turf for our athletes playing on Cottone Field.

Integrity, a proven record of achievement and vision. I urge you to vote for the entire Democratic team, Row A, on Nov. 7.

—Cindy Greenblatt

## Favors Mazzarella for council

### To the Editor:

It's time for a change and let's get it right. Vote Tom Mazzarella for Town Council.

Do you want a candidate who is trustworthy? Committed? Willing listener? Problem solver? Level-headed? Has business acumen? A voice of reason? Tom is all of these and more.

Tom and his wife Karen are lifetime residents of Wethersfield, having raised their two children here as well. Tom will tirelessly advocate for the town of Wethersfield and what is best for all residents.

He is a willing listener to all sides of an issue. When he takes a stance, it is only after thoroughly researching the facts on all sides of an issue. He will always be prepared and is never afraid to speak up, for or against, an issue of concern.

This may be Tom's first time running for office but he has been a frequent attendee to all Town Council meetings for the last few years. Tom's business experience, having built his successful turbine maintenance company from scratch, will give him great insight into the business dealings of the town.

Tom is a problem solver by nature and can be a voice of reason



in this difficult political environment. Let's keep Wethersfield on the right track for our children, businesses and all of the town's future endeavors. Tom has our votes for Town Council.

—Gail and Rick Rubendall

## Chairman promotes Democrats

### To the Editor:

On Nov. 7, it is my hope that the voters of Wethersfield will join me in voting for continued progress. The Democrats have led the way over the past four years. From the school system, to economic development, to the environment and attracting young families, the Democrats have delivered.

The Republicans have run a campaign that can only be described as anti-Wethersfield. If you listen to them, everything is terrible and nobody wants to live here. However, facts are stubborn and the facts don't support these claims.

The Democrats have led the way on economic development, bringing 93 new businesses to town over the past four years. Our school system is celebrating an impressive increase in test scores. Young families are attracted to Wethersfield and the there has never been more pride in our town.

I am proud to say that the Democrats have run a positive campaign. We have kept the focus on the issues and on our accomplishments. We are proud that we are running a slate of people who are well known in the community.

You know these Democrats from school, from church, from sports, or from their service to the town on boards and commissions. They all love Wethersfield and believe that it is a great place to live. They want to keep it that way.

More than that, these candidates are easily accessible. They want to talk with you and hear your ideas for how we can make Wethersfield even better. While Republicans running for council use phrases like make Wethersfield great again Democrats believe we are already great. Our diversity, our concern for the environment and preservation of open space, our new Heritage Walk, our 93 new businesses, our small class sizes, and our 100 percent high school graduation rate are just some of the reasons why Wethersfield is an amazing place to

live and raise a family.

Can we improve? Of course we can. We can only take the next steps with your support and your ideas. I can speak for the Democratic Town Committee when I say that you are all welcome to share your hopes and dreams with us. We believe the Democrats are the ones who can make sure it becomes a reality.

Anthony Spinella, Tony Martino and Amy Morrin-Bello are dedicated public servants who have proven they can lead. Ken Lesser, Mary Breton and Matt Forrest have the skill set to prove that 93 new businesses is just the beginning.

Our Board of Education candidates Polly Moon, Kevin Hill, Elaine Steinmiller-Paradise and Ginger McCurdy are an amazing team who will make sure that our schools provide the same great education that they have to so many of our children. In addition, a Democrat majority will insure that Bobbie Granato will continue as chairwoman of the Board of Education and continue to lead our schools in a positive direction.

As a parent of a Wethersfield Public Schools student, I know that our Board

—John Gallivan

Chairman

Democratic Town Committee

## Martino merits another term

### To the Editor:

I am writing to support the re-election of Tony Martino for his third term on the Town Council. Tony has the perfect background to serve on the council. He worked in the private sector as a manager at Travelers for 26 years, where he managed budgets that were larger than the combined town and Board of Education budget in Wethersfield.

He then had a career change which brought him to the town, where he worked for 17 years as an operations analyst with oversight of the engineering, planning, building inspection and fire marshal's budgets. He also oversaw capital budgets as well as the police department/radio town hall renovation budget and the school bond budgets.

Tony epitomizes the volunteer spirit for which Wethersfield is known. When he retired almost seven years ago, he chose to run for Town Council and use his professional expertise to make Wethersfield better. Tony spends

countless hours speaking to residents to get their input on important issues. Whenever someone is needed to represent the council at a town event, Tony is there.

As a champion of economic development, he has attended the opening of most new businesses in town and can be seen at Knights of Columbus events, the swearing-in and promotions of police officers – the list goes on and on.

As the retired Connecticut National Guard Commander of the 103rd Services Flight, he takes special pride in the town's Veterans' Day ceremonies, as well as serving on the Memorial Day Parade Committee.

One of Tony's passions is celebrating his Italian heritage in the Wethersfield Chapter of UNICO where he is a member of the board of directors and the chair of the UNICO Scholarship Committee. Tony is married to Terri Santomenno Martino and the father of two grown sons, Danny and Michael.

Tony's priorities are increasing economic development in town and continuing to streamline duplicative services between the town and the Board of Education to save money and keep taxes as low as possible. As a senior citizen himself, Tony's other priority is focusing on how Town Council decisions impact seniors and their ability to continue to live in Wethersfield.

I had the honor of serving one term on Council with Tony and I know that there is not a more diligent, hard-working member of Council.

—Gerri Roberts

## They like McCurdy

### To the Editor:

We highly endorse Ginger McCurdy for the Wethersfield Board of Education. We have had the pleasure of knowing Ginger for 14 years, ever since we chose to live in and raise our children here in Wethersfield.

With her extensive experience and strong background in strategic planning, budgeting and financial analysis, Ginger will be a thorough and solid asset to the Board of Education during the very difficult budget processes that lie ahead, given our current state economic climate.

Ginger was the first person I sought when, as a teacher in the Hartford public school system, I was seeking a volunteer to help with one

of my students. Her math and literacy skills have been honed by her many years of volunteering in the Wethersfield public school system and she was, as she always is, ready and eager to help my student.

Ginger's involvement and experience has extended to serving as the president of the Webb and Emerson PTOs and the Wethersfield Cooperative Nursery School. She has invested a significant amount of time tutoring students at four Wethersfield elementary schools, a K-8 magnet school in Hartford, and to adults through Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford.

Ginger's intent to investigate cost and services sharing with surrounding towns will benefit Wethersfield as we seek to streamline our educational costs and provide the greatest benefit for students. We are extraordinarily fortunate to have a candidate of Ginger's caliber willing to serve on the Wethersfield Board of Education and we urge all Wethersfield citizens to vote for Ginger McCurdy on Nov. 7.

—Tom and Katherine Feltes

138 Surrey Drive

## Paradise is his pick

### To the Editor:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter in support of Elaine Paradise for Board of Education. As a former student of Mrs. Paradise, I know firsthand her passion, dedication and wisdom.

I was privileged to have Mrs. Paradise as my fifth grade teacher at Hanmer. I had only been in Wethersfield a year and Mrs. Paradise was a crucial part in making this town my home. She not only taught me the value of knowing facts, but more importantly, how to find the facts for myself.

Without her, I would not know the great benefits of flashcards, math tricks, or simply going out and playing a game of kickball to take a mental break. Yes, these seem like mindless devices, but they have impacted me for many years. I still use flashcards for law school.

It is this type of leadership that is sorely needed in our town. Mrs. Paradise has already proven herself as a qualified leader and I hope she is given the opportunity to continue leading this town. She showed great passion to engage with each student while in the classroom and as a Board of Education member she has



continued to dedicate herself to quality education for all in our town.

Her experience as a teacher, parent and Board of Education member is unparalleled. I have an 11-year old sister in the Wethersfield public school system. It is my hope she has the same opportunity to succeed that I was given by this district.

I cannot think of a better person to achieve such a vision than Mrs. Paradise. Her impact on students, her experience and her tireless dedication offers a unique insight into education. Mrs. Paradise's voice is crucial if we hope to continue to provide quality education in Wethersfield. Please honor Mrs. Paradise with your vote in November.

—Rodrigo Rivera

## Kevin Hill is their man

### To the Editor:

We are writing in support of the re-election of Kevin Hill for the Wethersfield Board of Education. For the past two years, Kevin has proven himself to be dedicated, knowledgeable, caring, and committed to improving the quality and consistency of education in Wethersfield.

Kevin is fully qualified for a seat on the Board of Education. He graduated from Wethersfield High School, Providence College with a bachelor degree and a master degree, and received a second master degree from Trinity College in Hartford.

Presently, he is working in government relations at the state level. Because of this, he is fully aware of the political, economic and social issues that our town faces.

Anyone who knows Kevin will tell you that he is a man of integrity and purpose. He and his wife Jen chose Wethersfield to bring up their twins, Ellie and James, because of his own experience here and a desire to pass the same on to them.

He has strong family values and is an advocate not only for his own children but for all the children in our town. Wethersfield is lucky to have this young man who is committed to family, education and town.

Kevin has proven himself to be a board member who will listen to the concerns of parents and citizens of Wethersfield. He is willing to work long and hard to solve problems and reach compromises that will be favorable for our children and town.

He is always patient, objective and honest. You can depend on him

to continue to keep the school system strong and moving forward in the 21st century.

—Beth and Charles Stewart

## Backs Mazzarella

### To the Editor:

I endorse Tom Mazzarella for Town Council. His strong business skills are what we need in Wethersfield to manage the budget, control spending and get our property taxes in check.

Please get out and cast your vote for Tom Mazzarella on Nov. 7.

—Nancy O'Keefe

## Moon has done a good job

### To the Editor:

I write in support of Polly Moon, candidate for Wethersfield Board of Education. Polly is a smart, strategic and sensible advocate for education. Wethersfield voters will find no one more thoughtful, committed and sincere than Ms. Moon.

Throughout her six years of service on the Board of Education she has served in numerous leadership positions including chair of the Finance Committee and chair of Policy and Planning.

In an era when people of opposing views can barely speak civilly with each other, Polly brings a deft touch and a warm heart to her work on Board of Education. She is able to work constructively and effectively with administrators, fellow Board of Education members and Town Council members, whether they agree with her perspective or not.

I am grateful that she has volunteered her time to our town and urge you to support her on Election Day.

—Tracey McDougall

## For Forrest

### To the Editor:

I'm in a unique position of being a Wethersfield resident and small business owner and having been across the negotiating table with attorney Matthew Forrest. I can tell you he is both a considerate and skillful negotiator.

He knows how to develop the strengths of his position and knows how to compromise when appropriate. I would imagine he would bring this skill set directly to Wethersfield and I would want him on the negotiating side to get the best deal possible for the town and the protection of my tax dollars.

I wish more people with his

business and negotiation skill ran for office. I compromised on my position and we still shook on a deal. I will be supporting Matthew in his effort because I want more people like him on our council.

—Steven Frechette

## Breton gets the nod

### To the Editor:

It with great pleasure that I write this letter of endorsement for the candidacy of Mary Breton for Town Council. I have had the distinct honor of getting to know Mary through many years of witnessing her in church and school volunteer activities.

Mary and her husband John have always been active parents and citizens, working hard for what is right and good, with family values and hard work at their core.

Through her volunteer work in our parish, Mary has demonstrated her love of children, her strong belief that we all have a role in making the world a better place, and her reliability and integrity to the commitments she makes.

Observing her in volunteer activities, I have seen the due diligence of her preparation, execution and follow up, and have long admired her easy-going nature in the midst, always making things look effortless.

Mary is conscientious and incredibly thoughtful in her reaction and response to challenging issues. She takes the time to listen, is a critical thinker, and retorts with compassion and understanding. Mary's values are evident in the way she speaks, the way she conducts herself, and the way she lives her life.

We are blessed to have such an intelligent, diplomatic individual willing to give of her time to serve on our Town Council. She, along with the other Democratic candidates, care about maintaining the integrity of our town in our schools, in our town services and in our local economy.

We need people working together, galvanizing resources and bridging gaps. Mary is an ideal candidate in these demanding, divisive times, given her disciplined approach and calm demeanor. Please vote for Mary Breton on Nov. 7 for the betterment of Wethersfield.

—Anne Camilliere

## Re-elect Polly Moon

### To the Editor:

I served on the Wethersfield Library Board with Polly Moon and experienced first hand her excellent leadership, management and negotiation skills as the president. Polly has always been an advocate for the town, our wonderful library, and the Wethersfield school system.

Polly volunteers for the Friends of the Wethersfield Library during the biannual book sale and is a great sounding board for the board of directors. Polly is already doing a good job on the Board of Education and it makes sense to have her continue her efforts.

Her goal has been to make our school system the best it can be. This is why I urge the residents of Wethersfield to re-elect Polly to another term as a member of the Board of Education.

—Ralph Horowitz

Also writing in support of  
Polly Moon: Margaret Zacchei

## Sustaining excellence In our schools

### To the Editor:

Wethersfield has experienced excellent governance under the leadership of the Democratic Party. The town benefits from outstanding elected representatives who are dedicated to growing and sustaining our financial health, the excellence of our school system and our quality of life.

For the Board of Education, of which I have been chairperson for the last two years, Democratic leadership and bipartisan dedication to readying our school system for the requirements of 21st century education has resulted in success we should be proud of.

I am extremely grateful to all representatives of this board, irrelevant of their political party affiliation. We have always worked together with a priority of making the best decisions for our students and never to satisfy a political agenda. There is no room for politics in education.

After 40 immensely rewarding years in the classroom, I was delighted to be invited to be a Democratic candidate for the BOE. I accepted because I felt my teaching experience and still insatiable desire to provide our students the best education possible could be strong contributors.

Because Wethersfield voters chose a Democratic majority to lead



the BOE, to my great honor my peers selected me as its chairperson.

The work this board began two years ago has only begun to fulfill the vision we have embraced for our children's education. In these most difficult times, in order to sustain our momentum to create a school system that reflects 21st century education and to allow us to continue to lead that effort, it is imperative that the Democratic Party retains a majority on the board.

It is my personal plea to Wethersfield taxpayers that you vote for candidates Elaine Steinmiller-Paradise, Ginger McCurdy, Polly Moon and Kevin Hill to ensure Democratic majority on the BOE and to afford us the greatest honor of all, the opportunity to finish our job.

*—Bobbie Hughes Granato*

## Lesser is her choice

### To the Editor:

With our Town Council election happening this November, I wanted to let everyone know of an excellent candidate in Wethersfield – Ken Lesser. I came to know Ken earlier this year when I looking into the food security issues in Wethersfield.

Apparently, one in five Wethersfield children are food-insecure (do not always have access to healthy food). Ken has been the lead on the Hunger Action Team, which directly addresses the role that nutrition and hunger play in all of our lives, especially the children and the low-income communities.

In this same vein, he has reached out and offered his help with the building of new community vegetable garden beds, now in the planning stages for spring of 2018. He is willing to work with anyone who believes in the values of helping our community, regardless of their political affiliation.

For these reasons, I strongly support Ken as a Town Council member in this Nov. 1 election.

*—Melissa Wagner Pavick*

## Martino makes a difference

### To the Editor:

We are very happy to write this letter of support for Tony Martino, who is seeking reelection to the Town Council in Wethersfield. We have known Tony for many years and can certainly vouch for his character and high ethical standards.

These qualities are so important in our elected officials. We know

that Tony only wants our town to prosper and thrive. He has the valuable experience of having worked in our town's physical services and engineering departments for many years. This has given him an excellent knowledge of the budget process and the inner workings of our town services.

Tony has a passion to be the very best town councilor that he can be. He does his homework and gives each and every issue due diligence as he makes the best decisions for our town and its citizens.

We are confident he will work with both sides so that issues will be resolved in a timely manner.

Tony is always approachable and willing to listen to concerns and input from taxpayers. He is a solid, well-grounded individual who has Wethersfield's success and continued positive growth in mind. He has many ideas that will bring savings to the town.

We wholeheartedly support his reelection for another term. His dedicated performance shows that he deserves to remain on council so he can continue his hard work for the town and all our citizens.

Tony loves Wethersfield. If you love Wethersfield, then vote for Tony.

*—Brian and Connie Morin*

*Also writing in support of Tony Martino: Gerri Roberts*

## Democrats preferred

### To the Editor:

I am writing to express my support for the Democratic candidates for Wethersfield Town Council. They have a clear vision for what is best for our town.

Kenny Lesser exemplifies the spirit of volunteering in support of our town. It was from Kenny that I learned about Wethersfield's DTC and Hunger Action Team, both of which I have since joined due to his example and encouragement. Kenny truly listens when presented with new ideas and appreciates diverse points of view, both crucial qualities most needed in positions of town leadership.

Amy Bello has always been available to answer questions about the workings of Town Council, of which she is currently a dedicated member. After hearing from residents, she has represented us through the introduction to council of topics that reflect our concerns.

Amy appreciates the importance

of protecting our physical and business environments and investing in our schools. She also values the importance diversity, which serves to strengthen our community.

Matthew Forrest has over 14 years of experience of volunteering and leadership on the Town Council and Board of Education. In this time of our expanding need to find affordable energy alternatives, his background in finance and experience in recycling and energy issues will serve our town well.

*—Debra Cohen*

## Spinella serves well

### To the Editor:

As a longtime resident of Wethersfield and now of Rocky Hill, I have become increasingly aware of the need for long-range cooperative planning between towns. And I watch for public officials who will accomplish this.

Anthony Spinella, a Democrat who is running for re-election to the Town Council in Wethersfield, is one such official who realizes the strengths of shared services. For communities such as ours, which are in such close proximity and share many similar needs in terms of health, education and public safety, money can be saved by working together.

Budgets, taxes and debts can be addressed by encouraging regional cooperation. Both communities ultimately saw and met the needs of renovating their respective high schools. What more could be accomplished if infra-structure projects such as these could be shared in the future?

What more could be accomplished if economic development ideas were similarly planned and worked out together? These are the ideas that Anthony Spinella brings to public service.

Throughout all the difficulties of the current state budget negotiations, Anthony and many of his colleagues have stressed that the current financial and tax structure in our towns and in our state are not sustainable. New approaches must be fostered involving local and statewide efforts.

Cooperation is the only solution to solving such problems as safe streets and a strong economy. Connecticut is a beautiful state with many advantages. Let's capitalize on its strengths and seek to build upon

them. Kudos to all public officials who are willing to do so.

The citizens of Wethersfield are very fortunate to have Anthony Spinella running again for Town Council. He is willing to tackle complex issues with ideas based on his long-term public service and understanding of our communities.

If we are truly interested in saving our region and our state, the clear-thinking leadership of people such as Anthony Spinella is vital to all of our interests.

*—Gloria McLean*

## Will vote for Manousos

### To the Editor:

Stathis Manousos exudes care and love for the Wethersfield community, friends and family. Many of the residents in Wethersfield have had the privilege of working hand and hand with Stathis to support an issue we all feel passionate about.

He is a lifelong resident of Wethersfield who has served on the Wethersfield Town Council and is the president of the Wethersfield George D. Ritchie Soccer Club.

As the soccer president Stathis is forward thinking and has led the youth program to grow from pre-K through high school and stabilizing the financial condition of the club while improving the fields throughout our town.

He has also served on Town Council for six years and was the chair of the Budget and Finance Committee for four years. Stathis has proven to be an exemplary leader for our town. Join me in supporting Stathis Manousos for Wethersfield Town Council.

*—Janet Vasek*

## Believes in Spinella

### To the Editor:

As a longtime resident of Wethersfield and good friend of the Spinella family, I am happy to be able to reaffirm my belief in Anthony Spinella as an exceptional member of our Town Council. Anthony has always been an intelligent, well-informed young man of strong convictions.

These qualities have proven invaluable in his role as town councilman these past two years.

Anthony has demonstrated over and over again the importance of coming to meetings fully prepared, of listening to all sides of an issue, and then of applying a combination



of experience and extensive knowledge to each vote taken.

In addition, his background as both prosecutor and defense attorney have certainly served us well. He has helped to keep taxes down, put safety issues at the forefront of all deliberations and attract new businesses to our community because of his determination to put Wethersfield in the best possible light.

Anthony is also forward looking. He stresses how shared services between towns similar to ours might help solve some of the most complex budget problems we face.

He values the future without dismissing the best practices of the past. I strongly believe that Wethersfield will continue to benefit from his leadership.

—Kathy Lagana

## Prefer the Democrats

### To the Editor:

We will vote for the Democrats on Nov. 7 because they balance fiscal responsibility with sensitive management of social and educational programs. Wethersfield is in good financial health because of Democratic leadership, but that's not the only reason we love living here.

Wethersfield Democrats prioritize people in a way that promotes individual and community well being. We view no single party as having all the answers to the challenges we face as a community, but in this election only the Democrats have shown that they will govern with nuance, compassion, and vision.

Three Democratic candidates for Town Council stand out to us in particular: Amy Morrin Bello, Mary Breton, and Ken Lesser.

Amy Morrin Bello not only has extensive government experience as a former town employee and current town councilor, she also cares about social justice and the environment. Recently, she has begun to examine the possibility of Wethersfield adopting a fracking waste ban, as dozens of other Connecticut municipalities have done.

Mary Breton describes herself as a professional problem solver but her role on Town Council wouldn't be limited to solving existing problems. She wants to assess Wethersfield's broader future and plan wisely.

She sees the need for a comprehensive environmental plan (one

that goes beyond energy-efficient streetlights) to creatively tackle climate change and pollution at the local level.

Ken Lesser isn't afraid to talk about hunger in Wethersfield. His work on the Hunger Action Team has led to greater funding and programming to increase food security in town. Wethersfield has a diverse population with a range of needs and we need a candidate like Ken on Town Council who considers those needs when making decisions.

We want our tax dollars spent wisely. We want an efficient government. We also want leaders who proactively evaluate information and bring the community together to plan for an innovative, inclusive future.

Our street lanes should get painted, something the Republicans quibbled about at a recent Town Council meeting, but that's not enough. We need leaders who see that Wethersfield's economic future is tied to its environmental future, to safe streetscapes, to good schools, to a vibrant public library, to social justice and human rights, and to food security for families and seniors.

Amy Morrin Bello, Mary Breton, and Ken Lesser understand those connections and will enthusiastically help Wethersfield get even better in the next two years and beyond.

—Kaci White

—Jessica K. Martin

—Farah Assi Evenson

—Kelly Gagnon-De La Cruz

—Kristi Salters-Pedneault

## Lesser is their man

### To the Editor:

My husband and I have been Wethersfield residents for almost 60 years. We are both Wethersfield High School graduates. Our four daughters also graduated from Wethersfield High School and our grandchildren currently attend Wethersfield Public Schools.

Our grandchildren represent the fourth generation of our family to live in town. To date, we have never publicly endorsed a candidate for office. We feel compelled, however, to express our support for Town Council candidate Kenny Lesser.

We have known Kenny for a number of years and hold him in the highest regard. Hard-working, intelligent, dedicated, compassionate and innovative would be some of the words that best describe him. He has

an extensive business background, but more importantly, he values the quality of life we enjoy in our town and has a desire to preserve it and enhance it.

We feel that Kenny shares our love for the town and will work tirelessly to serve residents by focusing on economic development while safeguarding the charm and integrity of our town. He has a wonderful and supportive family who we know will encourage him and inspire him to be an outstanding public servant and we will all reap the benefit.

We have been served by many competent council members over the years and we feel that Kenny Lesser will rank among the very best of them. Whether you are a newcomer or a longtime resident of Wethersfield, we hope you will join our family in voting for Kenny Lesser for Town Council.

—Maureen and Dennis Sweeney

## They endorse Bello

### To the Editor:

In our opinion, Amy Bello is exactly the kind of young candidate Wethersfield needs in the office of Town Council. Amy is a fine young woman who grew up in Wethersfield, went to school here and is now raising her family here.

Her parents still live in Wethersfield as well. Our own families also largely remained in town and that is because they believe, like Amy, in the importance of family roots and family support.

With a combination of stability and fresh ideas, Amy has helped bring 92 new businesses to town in her first term in office. At a time when our state is struggling, Wethersfield is showing progress and we are both very happy that we are living here.

As senior citizens, we find reassurance in knowing that Amy has strong opinions on what to do to help our economy, keep our taxes in check, but still improve the safety and beauty of our town.

We are very concerned that Wethersfield remain the beautiful town it has always been. We know that she and her Democratic colleagues will continue to work hard for the benefit of all our citizens. That is why we want to return Amy to a second term on the Town Council.

—Linda Rubera  
and Marie Carucci

## Breton is her pick

### To the Editor:

I am writing this letter in support of Town Council candidate Mary S. Breton. I have known Mary, like so many town residents, through our children's activities.

In no particular order, Mary is in the midst of a successful 30-year career at Aetna, is a wife and a mom to three children in the Wethersfield public school system, has a law degree, is a Eucharistic minister and teacher at Incarnation Church, is an active Wethersfield High School Band Booster volunteer and the list goes on.

In essence, Mary is an intelligent, critical thinking, hard-working, good person who is involved in her community and really cares about how Wethersfield can continue to improve and solve the complex issues it faces – and for that she has my support.

—Lisa A. Stefano

## Father knows best

### To the Editor:

I am writing in support of my daughter Amy Morrin Bello for Town Council. My wife and I could not be prouder of her. Born in Wethersfield, she returned to town following her graduation from Providence College and began a career in town government as an assistant town clerk in Wethersfield.

Since that time she has been actively involved in the civic life of Wethersfield. While raising her family, she was an active member of parent-teacher organizations. She taught religious education at Incarnation Church, was a Girl Scout leader and a member of the Pine Acres board and Cooperative Nursery School board.

For the last two years Amy has expanded her civic service by serving on the Wethersfield Town Council, several of its subcommittees, and the Memorial Day Parade Committee. She also regularly attends Democratic Town Committee meetings and a host of local events.

Amy's knowledge of town government, dedication to doing what is best for residents of Wethersfield, and strong sense of volunteerism will serve her well for another term on the Town Council. My wife June and I encourage all Wethersfield citizens to vote for our daughter, Amy Morrin Bello.

—John Morrin



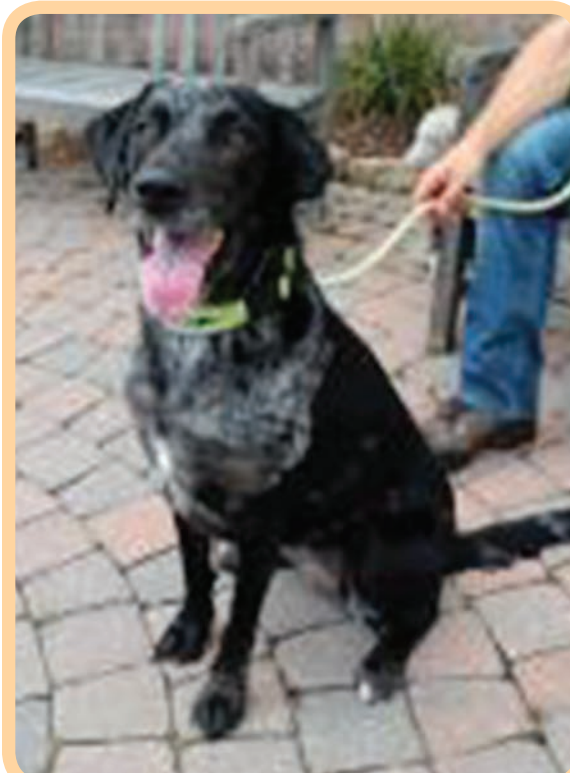
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## Lacy

Lacy is an 8-year-old Labrador retriever/German shepherd mix. She is a survivor of the hurricane that battered Houston, Texas, and is hoping to find a new home in Connecticut. Lacy would do best in a single-family home or condominium and any children should be 12 or older. She needs to be the only dog in the house and has plenty of energy. She enjoys walking but needs to be on a leash.

*Inquiries about adoption may be made at the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Road, Newington. Call 860-594-4500. More information, including videos, can be found online at [cthumane.org](http://cthumane.org). Click on "Adopt" and "Newington." The Connecticut Humane Society is a private organization and has no time limits for adoption. **WL***

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# Editorial

## Vote, because you can

**T**here will be an election Nov. 7, as there is every November for one office or another.

The 2017 election is all about this town. It's casting a ballot for those fellow residents who have put themselves before the public to serve on the Town Council, Board of Education and other bodies.

More people vote in presidential elections and they should not be discouraged from doing that. But the simple truth is that no election has greater impact upon us than the municipal one.

Residents will be selecting the people who determine how this town will be run. They will determine the services they receive as taxpayers, how their children are educated and protected while in school, and so much more.

The people on the ballot are also the people who will determine how much each business and homeowner pays in property taxes.

That impacts most families more than anything that happens at the state or national levels of government.

These men and women are community volunteers who are willing to spend a significant amount of their time serving the greater good.

They may have different political parties, approaches and philosophies, but they all have the same goal – to do the best they can for this town, its people and its schools.

They are not in it for personal gain. The mayor does not get a paycheck for doing this. Neither does any member of the council or school board. Not even a modest stipend. Nothing.

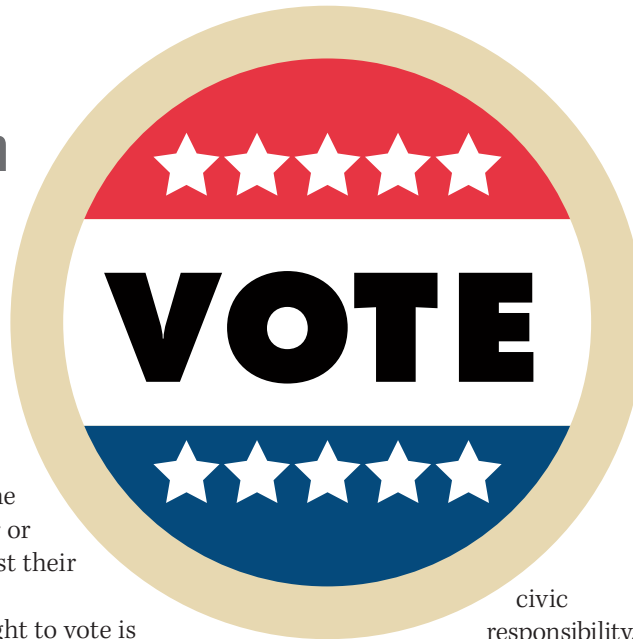
There are places around the world where people do not have the right to vote or are

struggling to acquire it. There are places where people are willing to stand in line for an hour or more to cast their ballot.

The right to vote is one of the greatest individual liberties Americans enjoy. Yet more and more people don't bother to participate in the political process until it's time to pick a president.

Local elections have at times been decided by only a handful of votes. Each vote cast in a municipal election truly matters.

Vote because it's your right. Vote because it's your



civic responsibility.

Vote to make a difference. Vote simply because you can.

It only takes a few minutes to go to the polling place, walk into the building, fill out a ballot and then go about the rest of the day or evening. That's not an imposition.

Show that you care about your town by participating in one of most special and treasured American traditions. **WL**



# wethersfield LIFE

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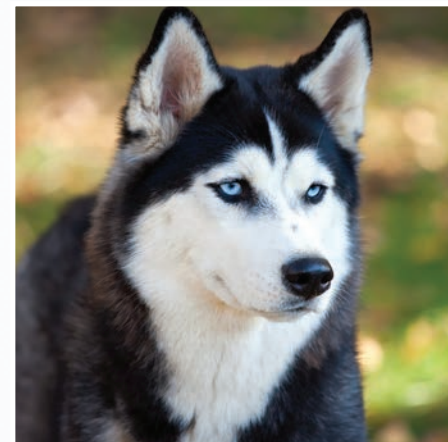
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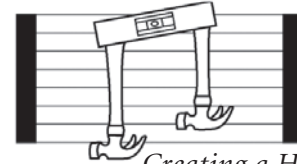
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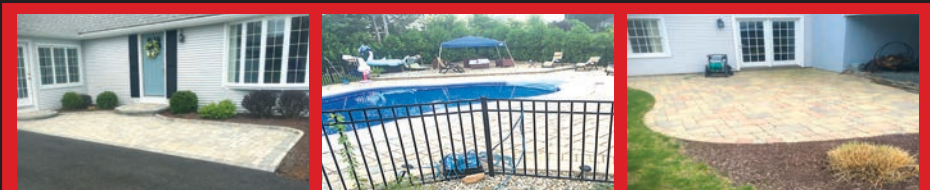
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BY MARK DIXON  
WFSB METEOROLOGIST [AMS]



## Daylight Saving Time!

**A**s of November 1st we have already lost 4 hours and 53 minutes of possible daylight, since the summer solstice occurring back on June 21st. By the time we reach the winter solstice in December (on the 21st), we will lose another 1 hour and 14 minutes of daylight.

Over the course of the summer, we enjoyed sunsets as late as 8:30pm; now, it's getting dark in the 5 o'clock hour. This year, November 5th marks the official end of Daylight Saving Time (DST). At 2 am, we 'fall back' and many think we 'gain' an hour of time (while in the spring we lose it). However, we are


reallocating that hour. After the 5th, we'll initially see more sun earlier in the day as sunset times shift to the 4 o'clock hour.

This practice of moving time, initially to make better use of daylight and to decrease energy consumption, dates back to early 20th century Europe. In the United States, implementation

happened in the 1950s and 60s and not every state participates in this clock-turning tradition. Furthermore, 10 years ago, Congress made a change to start DST 3 weeks earlier and end it 1 week later.

When setting your clocks, this is also a good time to change the batteries in your smoke detectors! **WL**



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